

José Rizal

The Collected Works of José Rizal

The Complete Works
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Table of Contents

The Reign of Greed
    A Complete English Version of El Filibusterismo from the Spanish ofJosé Rizal By Charles Derbyshire
    Manila Philippine Education Company 1912
Translator’s Introduction
Contents
On the Upper Deck
On the Lower Deck
Legends
Cabesang Tales
A Cochero’s Christmas Eve
Basilio
Simoun
Merry Christmas!
Pilates
Wealth and Want
Los Baños
Placido Penitente
The Class in Physics
In the House of the Students
Señor Pasta
The Tribulations of a Chinese
The Quiapo Fair
Legerdemain
The Fuse
The Arbiter
Manila Types
The Performance
A Corpse
Dreams
Smiles and Tears
Pasquinades
The Friar and the Filipino

Tatakut
Exit Capitan Tiago
Juli
The High Official
Effect of the Pasquinades
La Ultima Razón1
The Wedding
The Fiesta
Ben-Zayb's Afflictions
The Mystery
Fatality
Conclusion
GLOSSARY
The Social Cancer
    A Complete English Version of Noli Me Tangere from the Spanish ofJosé Rizal By Charles Derbyshire
    Manila Philippine Education Company New York: World Book Company 1912
    Translator's Introduction
        I
        II
        III
        IV
    Contents
    Author's Dedication
    Chapter I
    A Social Gathering
    Chapter II
    Crisostomo Ibarra
    Chapter III
    The Dinner
    Chapter IV
    Heretic and Filibuster
    Chapter V
    A Star in a Dark Night
    Chapter VI
    Capitan Tiago

Chapter VIII
An Idyl on an Azotea
Chapter VIII
Recollections
Chapter IX
Local Affairs
Chapter X
The Town
Chapter XI
The Rulers
Chapter XII
All Saints
Chapter XIII
Signs of Storm
Chapter XIV
Tasio: Lunatic or Sage
Chapter XV
The Sacristans
Chapter XVI
Sisa
Chapter XVII
Basilio
Chapter XVIII
Souls in Torment
Chapter XIX
A Schoolmaster’s Difficulties
Chapter XX
The Meeting in the Town Hall
Chapter XXI
The Story of a Mother
Chapter XXII
Lights and Shadows
Chapter XXIII
Fishing
Chapter XXIV
In the Wood
Chapter XXV

In the House of the Sage
Chapter XXVI
The Eve of the Fiesta
Chapter XXVII
In the Twilight
Chapter XXVIII
Correspondence
Chapter XXIX
The Morning
Chapter XXX
In the Church
Chapter XXXI
The Sermon
Chapter XXXII
The Derrick
Chapter XXXIII
Free Thought
Chapter XXXIV
The Dinner
Chapter XXXV
Comments
Chapter XXXVI
The First Cloud
Chapter XXXVII
His Excellency
Chapter XXXVIII
The Procession
Chapter XXXIX
Doña Consolacion
Chapter XL
Right and Might
Chapter XLI
Two Visits
Chapter XLII
The Espadañas
Chapter XLIII
Plans

Chapter XLIV
An Examination of Conscience
Chapter XLV
The Hunted
Chapter XLVI
The Cockpit
Chapter XLVII
The Two Señoras
Chapter XLVIII
The Enigma
Chapter XLIX
The Voice of the Hunted
Chapter L
Elias’s Story
Chapter LI
Exchanges
Chapter LII
The Cards of the Dead and the Shadows
Chapter LIII
Il Buon Dí Si Conosce Da Mattina1
Chapter LIV
Revelations
Chapter LV
The Catastrophe
Chapter LVI
Rumors and Beliefs
Chapter LVII
Vae Victis!
Chapter LVIII
The Accursed
Chapter LIX
Patriotism and Private Interests
Chapter LX
Maria Clara Weds
Chapter LXI
The Chase on the Lake
Chapter LXII

- Padre Damaso Explains
- Chapter LXIII
- Christmas Eve
- Epilogue
- Glossary

THE PHILIPPINES A CENTURY HENCE

- Introduction
- Jagor’s Prophecy
- The Philippines A Century Hence
  - I.
  - II.
  - III.
  - IV.
- Rizal’s Farewell Address
- Address to Some Filipinos
- Rizal’s Defence
  - Additions to My Defence
- Respecting the Rebellion.

Friars and Filipinos

- An abridged translation ofDr. José Rizal’s Tagalog Novel, “Noli Me Tangere.” By Frank Ernest Gannett.
- New York: The St. James Press.
- Preface.
- Contents.
- José Rizal.
- Friars and Filipinos.
- Chapter I.
- Don Santiago’s Dinner.
- Chapter II.
- At the Dinner Table.
- Chapter III.
- Heretic and Revolutionist.
- Chapter IV.
- Captain Tiago.
- Chapter V.
- An Idyl on the Azotea.1
- Chapter VI.

Things Philippine.
Chapter VII.
San Diego and Its People.
Chapter VIII.
Ibarra and the Grave-Digger.
Chapter IX.
Adventures of a School Teacher.
Chapter X.
Lights and Shadows.
Chapter XI.
The Fishing Party.
Chapter XII.
In the Woods.
Chapter XIII.
In the House of Tasio.
Chapter XIV.
The Eve of the Fiesta.
Chapter XV.
As Night Comes On.
Chapter XVI.
The Hoisting Crane.
Chapter XVII.
The Banquet.
Chapter XVIII.
The First Cloud.
Chapter XIX.
His Excellency.
Chapter XX.
The Procession.
Chapter XXI.
Doña Consolacion.
Chapter XXII.
Might and Right.
Chapter XXIII.
Two Visitors.
Chapter XXIV.
Episode in Espadaña’s Life.

Chapter XXV.
Schemes.
Chapter XXVI.
The Persecuted.
Chapter XXVII.
The Cock Fight.
Chapter XXVIII.
The Two Señoras.
Chapter XXIX.
The Enigma.
Chapter XXX.
The Voice of the Persecuted.
Chapter XXXI.
Elias’s Family.
Chapter XXXII.
Changes.
Chapter XXXIII.
Playing Cards with the Shades.
Chapter XXXIV.
The Discovery.
Chapter XXXV.
The Catastrophe.
Chapter XXXVI.
What People Say and Think.
Chapter XXXVII.
Vae Victis!
Chapter XXXVIII.
The Accursed.
Chapter XXXIX.
Maria Clara is Married.
Chapter XL.
The Pursuit on the Lake.
Chapter XLI.
Father Dámaso Explains.
THE INDOLENCE OF THE FILIPINO
BY JOSE RIZAL
("LA INDOLENCIA DE LOS FILIPINOS" IN ENGLISH.)

EDITOR'S EXPLANATION
I
II
III
IV
V
An Eagle Flight
A Filipino Novel
Adapted from
“Noli Me Tangere”
By Dr. José Rizal
New York McClure, Phillips & Co. MCMI
Contents.
Introduction
José Rizal
My Last Thought.
To My Country
An Eagle Flight
I.
The House on the Pasig.
II.
Crisóstomo Ibarra.
III.
The Dinner.
IV.
Heretic and Filibuster.
V.
A Star in the Dark Night.
VI.
Captain Tiago and Maria.
VII.
Idylle.
VIII.
Reminiscences.
IX.
Affairs of the Country.
X.

The Pueblo.
XI.
The Sovereigns.
XII.
All Saints’ Day.
XIII.
The Little Sacristans.
XIV.
Sisa.
XV.
Basilio.
XVI.
At the Manse.
XVII.
Story of a Schoolmaster.
XVIII.
The Story of a Mother.
XIX.
The Fishing Party.
XX.
In the Woods.
XXI.
With the Philosopher.
XXII.
The Meeting at the Town Hall.
XXIII.
The Eve of the Fête.
XXIV.
In the Church.
XXV.
The Sermon.
XXVI.
The Crane.
XXVII.
Free Thought.
XXVIII.
The Banquet.

XXIX.
Opinions.
XXX.
The First Cloud.
XXXI.
His Excellency.
XXXII.
The Procession.
XXXIII.
Doña Consolacion.
XXXIV.
Right and Might.
XXXV.
Husband and Wife.
XXXVI.
Projects.
XXXVII.
Scrutiny of Conscience.
XXXVIII.
The Two Women.
XXXIX.
The Outlawed.
XL.
The Enigma.
XLI.
The Voice of the Persecuted.
XLII.
The Family of Elias.
XLIII.
Il Buon Di si Conosce da Mattina.
XLIV.
La Gallera.
XLV.
A Call.
XLVI.
A Conspiracy.
XLVII.

The Catastrophe.
XLVIII.
Gossip.
XLIX.
Væ Victis.
L.
Accurst.
LI.
Patriotism and Interest.
LII.
Maria Clara Marries.
LIII.
The Chase on the Lake.
LIV.
Father Dámaso Explains Himself.
LV.
The Nochebuena.

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The Reign of Greed

A Complete English Version of El Filibusterismo from the Spanish of

José Rizal

By

Charles Derbyshire

Manila
Philippine Education Company
1912

[iv]

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Translator's Introduction

El Filibusterismo, the second of José Rizal's novels of Philippine life, is a story of the last days of the Spanish régime in the Philippines. Under the name of *The Reign of Greed* it is for the first time translated into English. Written some four or five years after*Noli Me Tangere*, the book represents Rizal's more mature judgment on political and social conditions in the islands, and in its graver and less hopeful tone reflects the disappointments and discouragements which he had encountered in his efforts to lead the way to reform. Rizal's dedication to the first edition is of special interest, as the writing of it was one of the grounds of accusation against him when he was condemned to death in 1896. It reads:

"To the memory of the priests, Don Mariano Gomez (85 years old), Don José Burgos (30 years old), and Don Jacinto Zamora (35 years old). Executed in Bagumbayan Field on the 28th of February, 1872.

"The Church, by refusing to degrade you, has placed in doubt the crime that has been imputed to you; the Government, by surrounding your trials with mystery and shadows, causes the belief that there was some error, committed in fatal moments; and all the Philippines, by worshiping your memory and calling you martyrs, in no [vi]sense recognizes your culpability. In so far, therefore, as your complicity in the Cavite mutiny is not clearly proved, as you may or may not have been patriots, and as you may or may not have cherished sentiments for justice and for liberty, I have the right to dedicate my work to you as victims of the evil which I undertake to combat. And while we await expectantly upon Spain some day to restore your good name and cease to be answerable for your death, let these pages serve as a tardy wreath of dried leaves over your unknown tombs, and let it be understood that every one who without clear proofs attacks your memory stains his hands in your blood!

J. Rizal."

A brief recapitulation of the story in *Noli Me Tangere* (The Social Cancer) is essential to an understanding of such plot as there is in the present work, which the author called a “continuation” of the first story.

Juan Crisostomo Ibarra is a young Filipino, who, after studying for seven years in Europe, returns to his native land to find that his father, a wealthy landowner, has died in prison as the result of a quarrel with the parish curate, a Franciscan friar named Padre Damaso. Ibarra is engaged to a beautiful and accomplished girl, Maria Clara, the supposed daughter and only child of the rich Don Santiago de los Santos, commonly known as “Capitan Tiago,” a typical Filipino cacique, the predominant character fostered by the friar régime.[vii]

Ibarra resolves to forego all quarrels and to work for the betterment of his people. To show his good intentions, he seeks to establish, at his own expense, a public school in his native town. He meets with ostensible support from all, especially Padre Damaso’s successor, a young and gloomy Franciscan named Padre Salvi, for whom Maria Clara confesses to an instinctive dread.

At the laying of the corner-stone for the new schoolhouse a suspicious accident, apparently aimed at Ibarra's life, occurs, but the festivities proceed until the dinner, where Ibarra is grossly and wantonly insulted over the memory of his father by Fray Damaso. The young man loses control of himself and is about to kill the friar, who is saved by the intervention of Maria Clara.

Ibarra is excommunicated, and Capitan Tiago, through his fear of the friars, is forced to break the engagement and agree to the marriage of Maria Clara with a young and inoffensive Spaniard provided by Padre Damaso. Obedient to her reputed father's command and influenced by her mysterious dread of Padre Salvi, Maria Clara consents to this arrangement, but becomes seriously ill, only to be saved by medicines sent secretly by Ibarra and clandestinely administered by a girl friend.

Ibarra succeeds in having the excommunication removed, but before he can explain matters an uprising against the Civil Guard is secretly brought about through agents of Padre Salvi, and the leadership is ascribed to Ibarra to ruin him. He is warned by a mysterious friend, an outlaw called Elias, whose life he had accidentally saved; but

desiring first to see Maria Clara, he refuses to make his escape, and when the outbreak [viii]occurs he is arrested as the instigator of it and thrown into prison in Manila.

On the evening when Capitan Tiago gives a ball in his Manila house to celebrate his supposed daughter's engagement, Ibarra makes his escape from prison and succeeds in seeing Maria Clara alone. He begins to reproach her because it is a letter written to her before he went to Europe which forms the basis of the charge against him, but she clears herself of treachery to him. The letter had been secured from her by false representations and in exchange for two others written by her mother just before her birth, which prove that Padre Damaso is her real father. These letters had been accidentally discovered in the convento by Padre Salvi, who made use of them to intimidate the girl and get possession of Ibarra's letter, from which he forged others to incriminate the young man. She tells him that she will marry the young Spaniard, sacrificing herself thus to save her mother's name and Capitan Tiago's honor and to prevent a public scandal, but that she will always remain true to him.

Ibarra's escape had been effected by Elias, who conveys him in a banka up the Pasig to the Lake, where they are so closely beset by the Civil Guard that Elias leaps into the water and draws the pursuers away from the boat, in which Ibarra lies concealed.

On Christmas Eve, at the tomb of the Ibarras in a gloomy wood, Elias appears, wounded and dying, to find there a boy named Basilio beside the corpse of his mother, a poor woman who had been driven to insanity by her husband's neglect and abuses on the part of the Civil Guard, her younger son having [ix]disappeared some time before in the convento, where he was a sacristan. Basilio, who is ignorant of Elias's identity, helps him to build a funeral pyre, on which his corpse and the madwoman's are to be burned.

Upon learning of the reported death of Ibarra in the chase on the Lake, Maria Clara becomes disconsolate and begs her supposed godfather, Fray Damaso, to put her in a nunnery. Unconscious of her knowledge of their true relationship, the friar breaks down and confesses that all the trouble he has stirred up with the Ibarras has been to prevent her from marrying a native, which would condemn her and her children to the oppressed and enslaved class. He finally yields to

her entreaties and she enters the nunnery of St. Clara, to which Padre Salvi is soon assigned in a ministerial capacity.[x]

> O masters, lords, and rulers in all lands,
> Is this the handiwork you give to God,
> This monstrous thing distorted and soul-quenched?
> How will you ever straighten up this shape-;
> Touch it again with immortality;
> Give back the upward looking and the light;
> Rebuild in it the music and the dream;
> Make right the immemorial infamies,
> Perfidious wrongs, immedicable woes?
> O masters, lords, and rulers in all lands,
> How will the future reckon with this man?
> How answer his brute question in that hour
> When whirlwinds of rebellion shake the world?

How will it be with kingdoms and with kings—
With those who shaped him to the thing he is—
When this dumb terror shall reply to God,
After the silence of the centuries?

Edwin Markham[xi]

Contents

I.	On the Upper Deck
II.	On the Lower Deck
III.	Legends
IV.	Cabesang Tales
V.	A Cochero’s Christmas Eve
VI.	Basilio
VII.	Simoun
VIII.	Merry Christmas
IX.	Pilates
X.	Wealth and Want
XI.	Los Baños
XII.	Placido Penitente
XIII.	The Class in Physics
XIV.	In the House of the Students
XV.	Señor Pasta
XVI.	The Tribulations of a Chinese

XVII. The Quiapo Pair
XVIII. Legerdemain
XIX. The Fuse
XX. The Arbiter
XXI. Manila Types
XXII. The Performance
XXIII. A Corpse
XXIV. Dreams
XXV. Smiles and Tears[xii]
XXVI. Pasquinades
XXVII. The Friar and the Filipino
XXVIII. Tatakut
XXIX. Exit Capitan Tiago
XXX. Juli
XXXI. The High Official
XXXII. Effect of the Pasquinades
XXXIII. La Ultima Razón

XXXIV. The Wedding

XXXV. The Fiesta

XXXVI. Ben-Zayb’s Afflictions

XXXVII. The Mystery

XXXVIII. Fatality

XXXIX. Conclusion

[1]

On the Upper Deck

Sic itur ad astra.

One morning in December the steamer *Tabo* was laboriously ascending the tortuous course of the Pasig, carrying a large crowd of passengers toward the province of La Laguna. She was a heavily built steamer, almost round, like the *tabú* from which she derived her name, quite dirty in spite of her pretensions to whiteness, majestic and grave from her leisurely motion. Altogether, she was held in great affection in that region, perhaps from her Tagalog name, or from the fact that she bore the characteristic impress of things in the country, representing something like a triumph over progress, a steamer that was not a steamer at all, an organism, stolid, imperfect yet unimpeachable, which, when it wished to pose as being rankly progressive, proudly contented itself with putting on a fresh coat of paint. Indeed, the happy steamer was genuinely Filipino! If a person were only reasonably considerate, she might even have been taken for the Ship of State, constructed, as she had been, under the inspection of *Reverendos* and *Ilustrísimos*....

Bathed in the sunlight of a morning that made the waters of the river sparkle and the breezes rustle in

the bending bamboo on its banks, there she goes with her white silhouette throwing out great clouds of smoke—the Ship of State, so the joke runs, also has the vice of smoking! The whistle shrieks at every moment, hoarse and commanding like a tyrant who would rule by shouting, so that no one on [2]board can hear his own thoughts. She menaces everything she meets: now she looks as though she would grind to bits the*salambaw*, insecure fishing apparatus which in their movements resemble skeletons of giants saluting an antediluvian tortoise; now she speeds straight toward the clumps of bamboo or against the amphibian structures, *karihan*, or wayside lunch-stands, which, amid*gumamelas* and other flowers, look like indecisive bathers who with their feet already in the water cannot bring themselves to make the final plunge; at times, following a sort of channel marked out in the river by tree-trunks, she moves along with a satisfied air, except when a sudden shock disturbs the passengers and throws them off their balance, all the result of a collision with a sand-bar which no one dreamed was there.

Moreover, if the comparison with the Ship of State is not yet complete, note the arrangement of the passengers. On the lower deck appear brown faces

and black heads, types of Indians,[1] Chinese, and mestizos, wedged in between bales of merchandise and boxes, while there on the upper deck, beneath an awning that protects them from the sun, are seated in comfortable chairs a few passengers dressed in the fashion of Europeans, friars, and government clerks, each with his *puro* cigar, and gazing at the landscape apparently without heeding the efforts of the captain and the sailors to overcome the obstacles in the river.

The captain was a man of kindly aspect, well along in years, an old sailor who in his youth had plunged into far vaster seas, but who now in his age had to exercise much greater attention, care, and vigilance to avoid dangers of a trivial character. And they were the same for each day: the same sand-bars, the same hulk of unwieldy steamer wedged into the same curves, like a corpulent dame [3]in a jammed throng. So, at each moment, the good man had to stop, to back up, to go forward at half speed, sending—now to port, now to starboard—the five sailors equipped with long bamboo poles to give force to the turn the rudder had suggested. He was like a veteran who, after leading men through hazardous campaigns, had in his age become the tutor of a capricious, disobedient, and lazy boy.

Doña Victorina, the only lady seated in the European group, could say whether the *Tabo* was not lazy, disobedient, and capricious—Doña Victorina, who, nervous as ever, was hurling invectives against the cascos, bankas, rafts of coconuts, the Indians paddling about, and even the washerwomen and bathers, who fretted her with their mirth and chatter. Yes, the *Tabo* would move along very well if there were no Indians in the river, no Indians in the country, yes, if there were not a single Indian in the world—regardless of the fact that the helmsmen were Indians, the sailors Indians, Indians the engineers, Indians ninety-nine per cent, of the passengers, and she herself also an Indian if the rouge were scratched off and her pretentious gown removed. That morning Doña Victorina was more irritated than usual because the members of the group took very little notice of her, reason for which was not lacking; for just consider—there could be found three friars, convinced that the world would move backwards the very day they should take a single step to the right; an indefatigable Don Custodio who was sleeping peacefully, satisfied with his projects; a prolific writer like Ben-Zayb (anagram of Ibañez), who believed that the people of Manila thought because he, Ben-Zayb, was a thinker; a canon like Padre

Irene, who added luster to the clergy with his rubicund face, carefully shaven, from which towered a beautiful Jewish nose, and his silken cassock of neat cut and small buttons; and a wealthy jeweler like Simoun, who was reputed to be the adviser and inspirer of all the acts of his Excellency, the Captain-General—[4]just consider the presence there of these pillars *sine quibus non* of the country, seated there in agreeable discourse, showing little sympathy for a renegade Filipina who dyed her hair red! Now wasn't this enough to exhaust the patience of a female Job—a sobriquet Doña Victorina always applied to herself when put out with any one!

The ill-humor of the señora increased every time the captain shouted "Port," "Starboard" to the sailors, who then hastily seized their poles and thrust them against the banks, thus with the strength of their legs and shoulders preventing the steamer from shoving its hull ashore at that particular point. Seen under these circumstances the Ship of State might be said to have been converted from a tortoise into a crab every time any danger threatened.

"But, captain, why don't your stupid steersmen go in that direction?" asked the lady with great indignation.

“Because it’s very shallow in the other, señora,” answered the captain, deliberately, slowly winking one eye, a little habit which he had cultivated as if to say to his words on their way out, “Slowly, slowly!”

“Half speed! Botheration, half speed!” protested Doña Victorina disdainfully. “Why not full?”

“Because we should then be traveling over those ricefields, señora,” replied the imperturbable captain, pursing his lips to indicate the cultivated fields and indulging in two circumspect winks.

This Doña Victorina was well known in the country for her caprices and extravagances. She was often seen in society, where she was tolerated whenever she appeared in the company of her niece, Paulita Gomez, a very beautiful and wealthy orphan, to whom she was a kind of guardian. At a rather advanced age she had married a poor wretch named Don Tiburcio de Espadaña, and at the time we now see her, carried upon herself fifteen years of wedded life, false frizzes, and a half-European costume—for her whole ambition had been to Europeanize herself, with the result that from the ill-omened day of her wedding she had gradually, [5]thanks to her criminal attempts, succeeded in so transforming herself that at

the present time Quatrefages and Virchow together could not have told where to classify her among the known races.

Her husband, who had borne all her impositions with the resignation of a fakir through so many years of married life, at last on one luckless day had had his bad half-hour and administered to her a superb whack with his crutch. The surprise of Madam Job at such an inconsistency of character made her insensible to the immediate effects, and only after she had recovered from her astonishment and her husband had fled did she take notice of the pain, then remaining in bed for several days, to the great delight of Paulita, who was very fond of joking and laughing at her aunt. As for her husband, horrified at the impiety of what appeared to him to be a terrific parricide, he took to flight, pursued by the matrimonial furies (two curs and a parrot), with all the speed his lameness permitted, climbed into the first carriage he encountered, jumped into the first banka he saw on the river, and, a Philippine Ulysses, began to wander from town to town, from province to province, from island to island, pursued and persecuted by his bespectacled Calypso, who bored every one that had the misfortune to travel in her

company. She had received a report of his being in the province of La Laguna, concealed in one of the towns, so thither she was bound to seduce him back with her dyed frizzes.

Her fellow travelers had taken measures of defense by keeping up among themselves a lively conversation on any topic whatsoever. At that moment the windings and turnings of the river led them to talk about straightening the channel and, as a matter of course, about the port works. Ben-Zayb, the journalist with the countenance of a friar, was disputing with a young friar who in turn had the countenance of an artilleryman. Both were shouting, gesticulating, waving their arms, spreading out their hands, [6]stamping their feet, talking of levels, fish-corrals, the San Mateo River,[2] of cascos, of Indians, and so on, to the great satisfaction of their listeners and the undisguised disgust of an elderly Franciscan, remarkably thin and withered, and a handsome Dominican about whose lips flitted constantly a scornful smile.

The thin Franciscan, understanding the Dominican's smile, decided to intervene and stop the argument. He was undoubtedly respected, for with a wave of his hand he cut short the speech of both at the moment

when the friar-artilleryman was talking about experience and the journalist-friar about scientists.

“Scientists, Ben-Zayb—do you know what they are?” asked the Franciscan in a hollow voice, scarcely stirring in his seat and making only a faint gesture with his skinny hand. “Here you have in the province a bridge, constructed by a brother of ours, which was not completed because the scientists, relying on their theories, condemned it as weak and scarcely safe—yet look, it is the bridge that has withstood all the floods and earthquakes!”[3]

“That’s it, *puñales,* that very thing, that was exactly what I was going to say!” exclaimed the friar-artilleryman, thumping his fists down on the arms of his bamboo chair. “That’s it, that bridge and the scientists! That was just what I was going to mention, Padre Salvi—*puñales!*”

Ben-Zayb remained silent, half smiling, either out of respect or because he really did not know what to reply, and yet his was the only thinking head in the Philippines! Padre Irene nodded his approval as he rubbed his long nose.

Padre Salvi, the thin and withered cleric, appeared to be satisfied with such submissiveness and went on in

the [7]midst of the silence: “But this does not mean that you may not be as near right as Padre Camorra” (the friar-artilleryman). “The trouble is in the lake—”

“The fact is there isn’t a single decent lake in this country,” interrupted Doña Victorina, highly indignant, and getting ready for a return to the assault upon the citadel.

The besieged gazed at one another in terror, but with the promptitude of a general, the jeweler Simoun rushed in to the rescue. “The remedy is very simple,” he said in a strange accent, a mixture of English and South American. “And I really don’t understand why it hasn’t occurred to somebody.”

All turned to give him careful attention, even the Dominican. The jeweler was a tall, meager, nervous man, very dark, dressed in the English fashion and wearing a pith helmet. Remarkable about him was his long white hair contrasted with a sparse black beard, indicating a mestizo origin. To avoid the glare of the sun he wore constantly a pair of enormous blue goggles, which completely hid his eyes and a portion of his cheeks, thus giving him the aspect of a blind or weak-sighted person. He was standing with his legs

apart as if to maintain his balance, with his hands thrust into the pockets of his coat.

“The remedy is very simple,” he repeated, “and wouldn’t cost a cuarto.”

The attention now redoubled, for it was whispered in Manila that this man controlled the Captain-General, and all saw the remedy in process of execution. Even Don Custodio himself turned to listen.

“Dig a canal straight from the source to the mouth of the river, passing through Manila; that is, make a new river-channel and fill up the old Pasig. That would save land, shorten communication, and prevent the formation of sandbars.”

The project left all his hearers astounded, accustomed as they were to palliative measures.[8]

“It’s a Yankee plan!” observed Ben-Zayb, to ingratiate himself with Simoun, who had spent a long time in North America.

All considered the plan wonderful and so indicated by the movements of their heads. Only Don Custodio, the liberal Don Custodio, owing to his independent position and his high offices, thought it his duty to attack a project that did not emanate from

himself—that was a usurpation! He coughed, stroked the ends of his mustache, and with a voice as important as though he were at a formal session of the Ayuntamiento, said, “Excuse me, Señor Simoun, my respected friend, if I should say that I am not of your opinion. It would cost a great deal of money and might perhaps destroy some towns.”

“Then destroy them!” rejoined Simoun coldly.

“And the money to pay the laborers?”

“Don’t pay them! Use the prisoners and convicts!”

“But there aren’t enough, Señor Simoun!”

“Then, if there aren’t enough, let all the villagers, the old men, the youths, the boys, work. Instead of the fifteen days of obligatory service, let them work three, four, five months for the State, with the additional obligation that each one provide his own food and tools.”

The startled Don Custodio turned his head to see if there was any Indian within ear-shot, but fortunately those nearby were rustics, and the two helmsmen seemed to be very much occupied with the windings of the river.

“But, Señor Simoun—”

“Don’t fool yourself, Don Custodio,” continued Simoun dryly, “only in this way are great enterprises carried out with small means. Thus were constructed the Pyramids, Lake Moeris, and the Colosseum in Rome. Entire provinces came in from the desert, bringing their tubers to feed on. Old men, youths, and boys labored in transporting stones, hewing them, and carrying them on their shoulders under the direction of the official lash, and afterwards, the survivors returned to their homes or perished [9]in the sands of the desert. Then came other provinces, then others, succeeding one another in the work during years. Thus the task was finished, and now we admire them, we travel, we go to Egypt and to Home, we extol the Pharaohs and the Antonines. Don’t fool yourself—the dead remain dead, and might only is considered right by posterity.”

“But, Señor Simoun, such measures might provoke uprisings,” objected Don Custodio, rather uneasy over the turn the affair had taken.

“Uprisings, ha, ha! Did the Egyptian people ever rebel, I wonder? Did the Jewish prisoners rebel against the pious Titus? Man, I thought you were better informed in history!”

Clearly Simoun was either very presumptuous or disregarded conventionalities! To say to Don Custodio's face that he did not know history! It was enough to make any one lose his temper! So it seemed, for Don Custodio forgot himself and retorted, "But the fact is that you're not among Egyptians or Jews!"

"And these people have rebelled more than once," added the Dominican, somewhat timidly. "In the times when they were forced to transport heavy timbers for the construction of ships, if it hadn't been for the clerics—"

"Those times are far away," answered Simoun, with a laugh even drier than usual. "These islands will never again rebel, no matter how much work and taxes they have. Haven't you lauded to me, Padre Salvi," he added, turning to the Franciscan, "the house and hospital at Los Baños, where his Excellency is at present?"

Padre Salvi gave a nod and looked up, evading the question.

"Well, didn't you tell me that both buildings were constructed by forcing the people to work on them under the whip of a lay-brother? Perhaps that

wonderful bridge was built in the same way. Now tell me, did these people rebel?”[10]

“The fact is—they have rebelled before,” replied the Dominican, “and *ab actu ad posse valet illatio!*”

“No, no, nothing of the kind,” continued Simoun, starting down a hatchway to the cabin. “What’s said, is said! And you, Padre Sibyla, don’t talk either Latin or nonsense. What are you friars good for if the people can rebel?”

Taking no notice of the replies and protests, Simoun descended the small companionway that led below, repeating disdainfully, “Bosh, bosh!”

Padre Sibyla turned pale; this was the first time that he, Vice-Rector of the University, had ever been credited with nonsense. Don Custodio turned green; at no meeting in which he had ever found himself had he encountered such an adversary.

“An American mulatto!” he fumed.

“A British Indian,” observed Ben-Zayb in a low tone.

“An American, I tell you, and shouldn’t I know?” retorted Don Custodio in ill-humor. “His Excellency has told me so. He’s a jeweler whom the latter knew in Havana, and, as I suspect, the one who got him

advancement by lending him money. So to repay him he has had him come here to let him have a chance and increase his fortune by selling diamonds—imitations, who knows? And he so ungrateful, that, after getting money from the Indians, he wishes—huh!" The sentence was concluded by a significant wave of the hand.

No one dared to join in this diatribe. Don Custodio could discredit himself with his Excellency, if he wished, but neither Ben-Zayb, nor Padre Irene, nor Padre Salvi, nor the offended Padre Sibyla had any confidence in the discretion of the others.

"The fact is that this man, being an American, thinks no doubt that we are dealing with the redskins. To talk of these matters on a steamer! Compel, force the people! And he's the very person who advised the expedition to [11]the Carolines and the campaign in Mindanao, which is going to bring us to disgraceful ruin. He's the one who has offered to superintend the building of the cruiser, and I say, what does a jeweler, no matter how rich and learned he may be, know about naval construction?"

All this was spoken by Don Custodio in a guttural tone to his neighbor Ben-Zayb, while he gesticulated,

shrugged his shoulders, and from time to time with his looks consulted the others, who were nodding their heads ambiguously. The Canon Irene indulged in a rather equivocal smile, which he half hid with his hand as he rubbed his nose.

“I tell you, Ben-Zayb,” continued Don Custodio, slapping the journalist on the arm, “all the trouble comes from not consulting the old-timers here. A project in fine words, and especially with a big appropriation, with an appropriation in round numbers, dazzles, meets with acceptance at once, for this!” Here, in further explanation, he rubbed the tip of his thumb against his middle and forefinger.[4]

“There’s something in that, there’s something in that,” Ben-Zayb thought it his duty to remark, since in his capacity of journalist he had to be informed about everything.

“Now look here, before the port works I presented a project, original, simple, useful, economical, and practicable, for clearing away the bar in the lake, and it hasn’t been accepted because there wasn’t any of that in it.” He repeated the movement of his fingers, shrugged his shoulders, and gazed at the others as

though to say, “Have you ever heard of such a misfortune?”

“May we know what it was?” asked several, drawing nearer and giving him their attention. The projects of Don Custodio were as renowned as quacks’ specifics.

Don Custodio was on the point of refusing to explain it from resentment at not having found any supporters in his diatribe against Simoun. “When there’s no danger, [12]you want me to talk, eh? And when there is, you keep quiet!” he was going to say, but that would cause the loss of a good opportunity, and his project, now that it could not be carried out, might at least be known and admired.

After blowing out two or three puffs of smoke, coughing, and spitting through a scupper, he slapped Ben-Zayb on the thigh and asked, “You’ve seen ducks?”

“I rather think so—we’ve hunted them on the lake,” answered the surprised journalist.

“No, I’m not talking about wild ducks, I’m talking of the domestic ones, of those that are raised in Pateros and Pasig. Do you know what they feed on?”

Ben-Zayb, the only thinking head, did not know—he was not engaged in that business.

“On snails, man, on snails!” exclaimed Padre Camorra. “One doesn’t have to be an Indian to know that; it’s sufficient to have eyes!”

“Exactly so, on snails!” repeated Don Custodio, flourishing his forefinger. “And do you know where they get them?”

Again the thinking head did not know.

“Well, if you had been in the country as many years as I have, you would know that they fish them out of the bar itself, where they abound, mixed with the sand.”

“Then your project?”

“Well, I’m coming to that. My idea was to compel all the towns round about, near the bar, to raise ducks, and you’ll see how they, all by themselves, will deepen the channel by fishing for the snails—no more and no less, no more and no less!”

Here Don Custodio extended his arms and gazed triumphantly at the stupefaction of his hearers—to none of them had occurred such an original idea.

“Will you allow me to write an article about that?” asked Ben-Zayb. “In this country there is so little thinking done—”[13]

“But, Don Custodio,” exclaimed Doña Victorina with smirks and grimaces, “if everybody takes to raising ducks the *balot*[5] eggs will become abundant. Ugh, how nasty! Rather, let the bar close up entirely!”[14]

[1] The Spanish designation for the Christianized Malay of the Philippines was *indio* (Indian), a term used rather contemptuously, the name *filipino* being generally applied in a restricted sense to the children of Spaniards born in the Islands.—Tr.

[2] Now generally known as the Mariquina.—Tr.

[3] This bridge, constructed in Lukban under the supervision of a Franciscan friar, was jocularly referred to as the *Puente de Capricho,* being apparently an ignorant blunder in the right direction, since it was declared in an official report made by Spanish engineers in 1852 to conform to no known principle of scientific construction, and yet proved to be strong and durable.—Tr.

[4] Don Custodio’s gesture indicates money.—Tr.

[5] Duck eggs, that are allowed to advance well into the duckling stage, then boiled and eaten. The señora is sneering at a custom among some of her own people.—Tr.

On the Lower Deck

There, below, other scenes were being enacted. Seated on benches or small wooden stools among valises, boxes, and baskets, a few feet from the engines, in the heat of the boilers, amid the human smells and the pestilential odor of oil, were to be seen the great majority of the passengers. Some were silently gazing at the changing scenes along the banks, others were playing cards or conversing in the midst of the scraping of shovels, the roar of the engine, the hiss of escaping steam, the swash of disturbed waters, and the shrieks of the whistle. In one corner, heaped up like corpses, slept, or tried to sleep, a number of Chinese pedlers, seasick, pale, frothing through half-opened lips, and bathed in their copious perspiration. Only a few youths, students for the most part, easily recognizable from their white garments and their confident bearing, made bold to move about from stern to bow, leaping over baskets and boxes, happy in the prospect of the approaching vacation. Now they commented on the movements of the engines, endeavoring to recall forgotten notions of physics, now they surrounded the young schoolgirl or the red-lipped *buyera* with her collar of *sampaguitas,*whispering into their ears words that

made them smile and cover their faces with their fans.

Nevertheless, two of them, instead of engaging in these fleeting gallantries, stood in the bow talking with a man, advanced in years, but still vigorous and erect. Both these youths seemed to be well known and respected, to judge from the deference shown them by their fellow passengers. The elder, who was dressed in complete black, was the medical [15]student, Basilio, famous for his successful cures and extraordinary treatments, while the other, taller and more robust, although much younger, was Isagani, one of the poets, or at least rimesters, who that year came from the Ateneo,[1] a curious character, ordinarily quite taciturn and uncommunicative. The man talking with them was the rich Capitan Basilio, who was returning from a business trip to Manila.

“Capitan Tiago is getting along about the same as usual, yes, sir,” said the student Basilio, shaking his head. “He won’t submit to any treatment. At the advice of *a certain person* he is sending me to San Diego under the pretext of looking after his property, but in reality so that he may be left to smoke his opium with complete liberty.”

When the student said *a certain person*, he really meant Padre Irene, a great friend and adviser of Capitan Tiago in his last days.

“Opium is one of the plagues of modern times,” replied the capitan with the disdain and indignation of a Roman senator. “The ancients knew about it but never abused it. While the addiction to classical studies lasted—mark this well, young men—opium was used solely as a medicine; and besides, tell me who smoke it the most?—Chinamen, Chinamen who don’t understand a word of Latin! Ah, if Capitan Tiago had only devoted himself to Cicero—” Here the most classical disgust painted itself on his carefully-shaven Epicurean face. Isagani regarded him with attention: that gentleman was suffering from nostalgia for antiquity.

“But to get back to this academy of Castilian,” Capitan Basilio continued, “I assure you, gentlemen, that you won’t materialize it.”

“Yes, sir, from day to day we’re expecting the permit,” replied Isagani. “Padre Irene, whom you may have noticed above, and to whom we’ve presented a team of bays, has promised it to us. He’s

on his way now to confer with the General." [16]"That doesn't matter. Padre Sibyla is opposed to it."

"Let him oppose it! That's why he's here on the steamer, in order to—at Los Baños before the General."

And the student Basilio filled out his meaning by going through the pantomime of striking his fists together.

"That's understood," observed Capitan Basilio, smiling. "But even though you get the permit, where'll you get the funds?"

"We have them, sir. Each student has contributed a real."

"But what about the professors?"

"We have them: half Filipinos and half Peninsulars."[2]

"And the house?"

"Makaraig, the wealthy Makaraig, has offered one of his."

Capitan Basilio had to give in; these young men had everything arranged.

"For the rest," he said with a shrug of his shoulders, "it's not altogether bad, it's not a bad idea, and now

that you can't know Latin at least you may know Castilian. Here you have another instance, namesake, of how we are going backwards. In our times we learned Latin because our books were in Latin; now you study Latin a little but have no Latin books. On the other hand, your books are in Castilian and that language is not taught—*aetas parentum pejor avis tulit nos nequiores!* as Horace said." With this quotation he moved away majestically, like a Roman emperor.

The youths smiled at each other. "These men of the past," remarked Isagani, "find obstacles for everything. Propose a thing to them and instead of seeing its advantages they only fix their attention on the difficulties. They want everything to come smooth and round as a billiard ball."

"He's right at home with your uncle," observed Basilio.[17]

"They talk of past times. But listen—speaking of uncles, what does yours say about Paulita?"

Isagani blushed. "He preached me a sermon about the choosing of a wife. I answered him that there wasn't in Manila another like her—beautiful, well-bred, an orphan—"

“Very wealthy, elegant, charming, with no defect other than a ridiculous aunt,” added Basilio, at which both smiled.

“In regard to the aunt, do you know that she has charged me to look for her husband?”

“Doña Victorina? And you’ve promised, in order to keep your sweetheart.”

“Naturally! But the fact is that her husband is actually hidden—in my uncle’s house!”

Both burst into a laugh at this, while Isagani continued: “That’s why my uncle, being a conscientious man, won’t go on the upper deck, fearful that Doña Victorina will ask him about Don Tiburcio. Just imagine, when Doña Victorina learned that I was a steerage passenger she gazed at me with a disdain that—”

At that moment Simoun came down and, catching sight of the two young men, greeted Basilio in a patronizing tone: “Hello, Don Basilio, you’re off for the vacation? Is the gentleman a townsman of yours?”

Basilio introduced Isagani with the remark that he was not a townsman, but that their homes were not

very far apart. Isagani lived on the seashore of the opposite coast. Simoun examined him with such marked attention that he was annoyed, turned squarely around, and faced the jeweler with a provoking stare.

“Well, what is the province like?” the latter asked, turning again to Basilio.

“Why, aren’t you familiar with it?”

“How the devil am I to know it when I’ve never set foot in it? I’ve been told that it’s very poor and doesn’t buy jewels.”[18]

“We don’t buy jewels, because we don’t need them,” rejoined Isagani dryly, piqued in his provincial pride.

A smile played over Simoun’s pallid lips. “Don’t be offended, young man,” he replied. “I had no bad intentions, but as I’ve been assured that nearly all the money is in the hands of the native priests, I said to myself: the friars are dying for curacies and the Franciscans are satisfied with the poorest, so when they give them up to the native priests the truth must be that the king’s profile is unknown there. But enough of that! Come and have a beer with me and we’ll drink to the prosperity of your province.”

The youths thanked him, but declined the offer.

“You do wrong,” Simoun said to them, visibly taken aback. “Beer is a good thing, and I heard Padre Camorra say this morning that the lack of energy noticeable in this country is due to the great amount of water the inhabitants drink.”

Isagani was almost as tall as the jeweler, and at this he drew himself up.

“Then tell Padre Camorra,” Basilio hastened to say, while he nudged Isagani slyly, “tell him that if he would drink water instead of wine or beer, perhaps we might all be the gainers and he would not give rise to so much talk.”

“And tell him, also,” added Isagani, paying no attention to his friend’s nudges, “that water is very mild and can be drunk, but that it drowns out the wine and beer and puts out the fire, that heated it becomes steam, and that ruffled it is the ocean, that it once destroyed mankind and made the earth tremble to its foundations!”[3]

Simoun raised his head. Although his looks could not be read through the blue goggles, on the rest of his face surprise might be seen. “Rather a good answer,” he said. “But I fear that he might get facetious and

ask me when the [19]water will be converted into steam and when into an ocean. Padre Camorra is rather incredulous and is a great wag."

"When the fire heats it, when the rivulets that are now scattered through the steep valleys, forced by fatality, rush together in the abyss that men are digging," replied Isagani.

"No, Señor Simoun," interposed Basilio, changing to a jesting tone, "rather keep in mind the verses of my friend Isagani himself:

> 'Fire you, you say, and water we,
> Then as you wish, so let it be;
> But let us live in peace and right,
> Nor shall the fire e'er see us fight;
> So joined by wisdom's glowing flame,
> That without anger, hate, or blame,
> We form the steam, the fifth element,
> Progress and light, life and movement.'"

"Utopia, Utopia!" responded Simoun dryly. "The engine is about to meet—in the meantime, I'll drink my beer." So, without any word of excuse, he left the two friends.

“But what’s the matter with you today that you’re so quarrelsome?” asked Basilio.

“Nothing. I don’t know why, but that man fills me with horror, fear almost.”

“I was nudging you with my elbow. Don’t you know that he’s called the Brown Cardinal?”

“The Brown Cardinal?”

“Or Black Eminence, as you wish.”

“I don’t understand.”

“Richelieu had a Capuchin adviser who was called the Gray Eminence; well, that’s what this man is to the General.”

“Really?”

“That’s what I’ve heard from *a certain person,*—who always speaks ill of him behind his back and flatters him to his face.”

“Does he also visit Capitan Tiago?”

“From the first day after his arrival, and I’m sure that [20]*a certain person* looks upon him as a rival—in the inheritance. I believe that he’s going to see the General about the question of instruction in Castilian.”

At that moment Isagani was called away by a servant to his uncle.

On one of the benches at the stern, huddled in among the other passengers, sat a native priest gazing at the landscapes that were successively unfolded to his view. His neighbors made room for him, the men on passing taking off their hats, and the gamblers not daring to set their table near where he was. He said little, but neither smoked nor assumed arrogant airs, nor did he disdain to mingle with the other men, returning the salutes with courtesy and affability as if he felt much honored and very grateful. Although advanced in years, with hair almost completely gray, he appeared to be in vigorous health, and even when seated held his body straight and his head erect, but without pride or arrogance. He differed from the ordinary native priests, few enough indeed, who at that period served merely as coadjutors or administered some curacies temporarily, in a certain self-possession and gravity, like one who was conscious of his personal dignity and the sacredness of his office. A superficial examination of his appearance, if not his white hair, revealed at once that he belonged to another epoch, another generation, when the better young men were not afraid to risk

their dignity by becoming priests, when the native clergy looked any friar at all in the face, and when their class, not yet degraded and vilified, called for free men and not slaves, superior intelligences and not servile wills. In his sad and serious features was to be read the serenity of a soul fortified by study and meditation, perhaps tried out by deep moral suffering. This priest was Padre Florentino, Isagani's uncle, and his story is easily told.

Scion of a wealthy and influential family of Manila, of agreeable appearance and cheerful disposition, suited to shine in the world, he had never felt any call to the sacerdotal [21]profession, but by reason of some promises or vows, his mother, after not a few struggles and violent disputes, compelled him to enter the seminary. She was a great friend of the Archbishop, had a will of iron, and was as inexorable as is every devout woman who believes that she is interpreting the will of God. Vainly the young Florentine offered resistance, vainly he begged, vainly he pleaded his love affairs, even provoking scandals: priest he had to become at twenty-five years of age, and priest he became. The Archbishop ordained him, his first mass was celebrated with great pomp, three days were given over to feasting, and his

mother died happy and content, leaving him all her fortune.

But in that struggle Florentine received a wound from which he never recovered. Weeks before his first mass the woman he loved, in desperation, married a nobody—a blow the rudest he had ever experienced. He lost his moral energy, life became dull and insupportable. If not his virtue and the respect for his office, that unfortunate love affair saved him from the depths into which the regular orders and secular clergymen both fall in the Philippines. He devoted himself to his parishioners as a duty, and by inclination to the natural sciences.

When the events of seventy-two occurred,[4] he feared that the large income his curacy yielded him would attract attention to him, so, desiring peace above everything, he sought and secured his release, living thereafter as a private individual on his patrimonial estate situated on the Pacific coast. He there adopted his nephew, Isagani, who was reported by the malicious to be his own son by his old sweetheart when she became a widow, and by the more serious and better informed, the natural child of a cousin, a lady in Manila.[22]

The captain of the steamer caught sight of the old priest and insisted that he go to the upper deck, saying, “If you don’t do so, the friars will think that you don’t want to associate with them.”

Padre Florentino had no recourse but to accept, so he summoned his nephew in order to let him know where he was going, and to charge him not to come near the upper deck while he was there. “If the captain notices you, he’ll invite you also, and we should then be abusing his kindness.”

“My uncle’s way!” thought Isagani. “All so that I won’t have any reason for talking with Doña Victorina.”[23]

[1] The Jesuit College in Manila, established in 1859.—Tr.

[2] Natives of Spain; to distinguish them from the Filipinos, *i.e.,* descendants of Spaniards born in the Philippines. See Glossary: “Indian.”—Tr.

[3] It was a common saying among the old Filipinos that the Spaniards (white men) were fire (activity), while they themselves were water (passivity).—Tr.

[4] The “liberal” demonstrations in Manila, and the mutiny in the Cavite Arsenal, resulting in the garroting of the three native priests to whom this work was dedicated: the first of a series of fatal mistakes, culminating in the execution of the author, that cost Spain the loyalty of the Filipinos.—Tr.

Legends

Ich weiss nicht was soil es bedeuten
Dass ich so traurig bin!

When Padre Florentino joined the group above, the bad humor provoked by the previous discussion had entirely disappeared. Perhaps their spirits had been raised by the attractive houses of the town of Pasig, or the glasses of sherry they had drunk in preparation for the coming meal, or the prospect of a good breakfast. Whatever the cause, the fact was that they were all laughing and joking, even including the lean Franciscan, although he made little noise and his smiles looked like death-grins.

“Evil times, evil times!” said Padre Sibyla with a laugh.

“Get out, don’t say that, Vice-Rector!” responded the Canon Irene, giving the other’s chair a shove. “In Hongkong you’re doing a fine business, putting up every building that—ha, ha!”

“Tut, tut!” was the reply; “you don’t see our expenses, and the tenants on our estates are beginning to complain—”

“Here, enough of complaints, *puñales,* else I’ll fall to weeping!” cried Padre Camorra gleefully. “We’re not

complaining, and we haven't either estates or banking-houses. You know that my Indians are beginning to haggle over the fees and to flash schedules on me! Just look how they cite schedules to me now, and none other than those of the Archbishop Basilio Sancho,[1] as if from his time [24]up to now prices had not risen. Ha, ha, ha! Why should a baptism cost less than a chicken? But I play the deaf man, collect what I can, and never complain. We're not avaricious, are we, Padre Salvi?"

At that moment Simoun's head appeared above the hatchway.

"Well, where've you been keeping yourself?" Don Custodio called to him, having forgotten all about their dispute. "You're missing the prettiest part of the trip!"

"Pshaw!" retorted Simoun, as he ascended, "I've seen so many rivers and landscapes that I'm only interested in those that call up legends."

"As for legends, the Pasig has a few," observed the captain, who did not relish any depreciation of the river where he navigated and earned his livelihood. "Here you have that of *Malapad-na-bato,* a rock sacred before the coming of the Spaniards as the

abode of spirits. Afterwards, when the superstition had been dissipated and the rock profaned, it was converted into a nest of tulisanes, since from its crest they easily captured the luckless bankas, which had to contend against both the currents and men. Later, in our time, in spite of human interference, there are still told stories about wrecked bankas, and if on rounding it I didn't steer with my six senses, I'd be smashed against its sides. Then you have another legend, that of Doña Jeronima's cave, which Padre Florentino can relate to you."

"Everybody knows that," remarked Padre Sibyla disdainfully.

But neither Simoun, nor Ben-Zayb, nor Padre Irene, nor Padre Camorra knew it, so they begged for the story, some in jest and others from genuine curiosity. The priest, adopting the tone of burlesque with which some had made their request, began like an old tutor relating a story to children.

"Once upon a time there was a student who had made a promise of marriage to a young woman in his country, [25]but it seems that he failed to remember her. She waited for him faithfully year after year, her youth passed, she grew into middle age, and then one

day she heard a report that her old sweetheart was the Archbishop of Manila. Disguising herself as a man, she came round the Cape and presented herself before his grace, demanding the fulfilment of his promise. What she asked was of course impossible, so the Archbishop ordered the preparation of the cave that you may have noticed with its entrance covered and decorated with a curtain of vines. There she lived and died and there she is buried. The legend states that Doña Jeronima was so fat that she had to turn sidewise to get into it. Her fame as an enchantress sprung from her custom of throwing into the river the silver dishes which she used in the sumptuous banquets that were attended by crowds of gentlemen. A net was spread under the water to hold the dishes and thus they were cleaned. It hasn't been twenty years since the river washed the very entrance of the cave, but it has gradually been receding, just as the memory of her is dying out among the people."

"A beautiful legend!" exclaimed Ben-Zayb. "I'm going to write an article about it. It's sentimental!"

Doña Victorina thought of dwelling in such a cave and was about to say so, when Simoun took the floor instead.

“But what’s your opinion about that, Padre Salvi?” he asked the Franciscan, who seemed to be absorbed in thought. “Doesn’t it seem to you as though his Grace, instead of giving her a cave, ought to have placed her in a nunnery—in St. Clara’s, for example? What do you say?”

There was a start of surprise on Padre Sibyla’s part to notice that Padre Salvi shuddered and looked askance at Simoun.

“Because it’s not a very gallant act,” continued Simoun quite naturally, “to give a rocky cliff as a home to one with whose hopes we have trifled. It’s hardly religious to expose her thus to temptation, in a cave on the banks of a river—it smacks of nymphs and dryads. It would [26]have been more gallant, more pious, more romantic, more in keeping with the customs of this country, to shut her up in St. Clara’s, like a new Eloise, in order to visit and console her from time to time.”

“I neither can nor should pass judgment upon the conduct of archbishops,” replied the Franciscan sourly.

“But you, who are the ecclesiastical governor, acting in the place of our Archbishop, what would you do if

such a case should arise?”

Padre Salvi shrugged his shoulders and calmly responded, “It’s not worth while thinking about what can’t happen. But speaking of legends, don’t overlook the most beautiful, since it is the truest: that of the miracle of St. Nicholas, the ruins of whose church you may have noticed. I’m going to relate it to Señor Simoun, as he probably hasn’t heard it. It seems that formerly the river, as well as the lake, was infested with caymans, so huge and voracious that they attacked bankas and upset them with a slap of the tail. Our chronicles relate that one day an infidel Chinaman, who up to that time had refused to be converted, was passing in front of the church, when suddenly the devil presented himself to him in the form of a cayman and upset the banka, in order to devour him and carry him off to hell. Inspired by God, the Chinaman at that moment called upon St. Nicholas and instantly the cayman was changed into a stone. The old people say that in their time the monster could easily be recognized in the pieces of stone that were left, and, for my part, I can assure you that I have clearly made out the head, to judge from which the monster must have been enormously large.”

“Marvelous, a marvelous legend!” exclaimed Ben-Zayb. “It’s good for an article—the description of the monster, the terror of the Chinaman, the waters of the river, the bamboo brakes. Also, it’ll do for a study of comparative religions; because, look you, an infidel Chinaman in great distress invoked exactly the saint that he must know only by hearsay and in whom he did not believe. Here there’s[27]no room for the proverb that ‘a known evil is preferable to an unknown good.’ If I should find myself in China and get caught in such a difficulty, I would invoke the obscurest saint in the calendar before Confucius or Buddha. Whether this is due to the manifest superiority of Catholicism or to the inconsequential and illogical inconsistency in the brains of the yellow race, a profound study of anthropology alone will be able to elucidate.”

Ben-Zayb had adopted the tone of a lecturer and was describing circles in the air with his forefinger, priding himself on his imagination, which from the most insignificant facts could deduce so many applications and inferences. But noticing that Simoun was preoccupied and thinking that he was pondering over what he, Ben-Zayb, had just said, he inquired what the jeweler was meditating about.

“About two very important questions,” answered Simoun; “two questions that you might add to your article. First, what may have become of the devil on seeing himself suddenly confined within a stone? Did he escape? Did he stay there? Was he crushed? Second, if the petrified animals that I have seen in various European museums may not have been the victims of some antediluvian saint?”

The tone in which the jeweler spoke was so serious, while he rested his forehead on the tip of his forefinger in an attitude of deep meditation, that Padre Camorra responded very gravely, “Who knows, who knows?”

“Since we’re busy with legends and are now entering the lake,” remarked Padre Sibyla, “the captain must know many—”

At that moment the steamer crossed the bar and the panorama spread out before their eyes was so truly magnificent that all were impressed. In front extended the beautiful lake bordered by green shores and blue mountains, like a huge mirror, framed in emeralds and sapphires, reflecting the sky in its glass. On the right were spread out the low shores, forming bays with graceful curves, and dim there in the

distance the crags of Sungay, while in the [28]background rose Makiling, imposing and majestic, crowned with fleecy clouds. On the left lay Talim Island with its curious sweep of hills. A fresh breeze rippled over the wide plain of water.

“By the way, captain,” said Ben-Zayb, turning around, “do you know in what part of the lake a certain Guevara, Navarra, or Ibarra, was killed?”

The group looked toward the captain, with the exception of Simoun, who had turned away his head as though to look for something on the shore.

“Ah, yes!” exclaimed Doña Victorina. “Where, captain? Did he leave any tracks in the water?”

The good captain winked several times, an indication that he was annoyed, but reading the request in the eyes of all, took a few steps toward the bow and scanned the shore.

“Look over there,” he said in a scarcely audible voice, after making sure that no strangers were near. “According to the officer who conducted the pursuit, Ibarra, upon finding himself surrounded, jumped out of his banka there near the Kinabutasan[2] and, swimming under water, covered all that distance of more than two miles, saluted by bullets every time

that he raised his head to breathe. Over yonder is where they lost track of him, and a little farther on near the shore they discovered something like the color of blood. And now I think of it, it's just thirteen years, day for day, since this happened."

"So that his corpse—" began Ben-Zayb.

"Went to join his father's," replied Padre Sibyla. "Wasn't he also another filibuster, Padre Salvi?"

"That's what might be called cheap funerals, Padre Camorra, eh?" remarked Ben-Zayb.[29]

"I've always said that those who won't pay for expensive funerals are filibusters," rejoined the person addressed, with a merry laugh.

"But what's the matter with you, Señor Simoun?" inquired Ben-Zayb, seeing that the jeweler was motionless and thoughtful. "Are you seasick—an old traveler like you? On such a drop of water as this!"

"I want to tell you," broke in the captain, who had come to hold all those places in great affection, "that you can't call this a drop of water. It's larger than any lake in Switzerland and all those in Spain put together. I've seen old sailors who got seasick here."[30]

[1] Archbishop of Manila from 1767 to 1787.—Tr.

[2] "Between this island (Talim) and Halahala point extends a strait a mile wide and a league long, which the Indians call 'Kinabutasan,' a name that in their language means 'place that was cleft open'; from which it is inferred that in other times the island was joined to the mainland and was separated from it by some severe earthquake, thus leaving this strait: of this there is an old tradition among the Indians."—Fray Martinez de Zuñiga's *Estadismo* (1803).

Cabesang Tales

Those who have read the first part of this story will perhaps remember an old wood-cutter who lived in the depths of the forest.[1] Tandang Selo is still alive, and though his hair has turned completely white, he yet preserves his good health. He no longer hunts or cuts firewood, for his fortunes have improved and he works only at making brooms.

His son Tales (abbreviation of Telesforo) had worked at first on shares on the lands of a capitalist, but later, having become the owner of two carabaos and several hundred pesos, determined to work on his own account, aided by his father, his wife, and his three children. So they cut down and cleared away some thick woods which were situated on the borders of the town and which they believed belonged to no one. During the labors of cleaning and cultivating the new land, the whole family fell ill with malaria and the mother died, along with the eldest daughter, Lucia, in the flower of her age. This, which was the natural consequence of breaking up new soil infested with various kinds of bacteria, they attributed to the anger of the woodland spirit, so they were resigned and went on with their labor, believing him pacified.

But when they began to harvest their first crop a religious corporation, which owned land in the neighboring town, laid claim to the fields, alleging that they fell within their boundaries, and to prove it they at once started to set up [31]their marks. However, the administrator of the religious order left to them, for humanity's sake, the usufruct of the land on condition that they pay a small sum annually—a mere bagatelle, twenty or thirty pesos. Tales, as peaceful a man as could be found, was as much opposed to lawsuits as any one and more submissive to the friars than most people; so, in order not to smash a *palyok* against a *kawali* (as he said, for to him the friars were iron pots and he a clay jar), he had the weakness to yield to their claim, remembering that he did not know Spanish and had no money to pay lawyers.

Besides, Tandang Selo said to him, "Patience! You would spend more in one year of litigation than in ten years of paying what the white padres demand. And perhaps they'll pay you back in masses! Pretend that those thirty pesos had been lost in gambling or had fallen into the water and been swallowed by a cayman."

The harvest was abundant and sold well, so Tales planned to build a wooden house in the barrio of Sagpang, of the town of Tiani, which adjoined San Diego.

Another year passed, bringing another good crop, and for this reason the friars raised the rent to fifty pesos, which Tales paid in order not to quarrel and because he expected to sell his sugar at a good price.

“Patience! Pretend that the cayman has grown some,” old Selo consoled him.

That year he at last saw his dream realized: to live in the barrio of Sagpang in a wooden house. The father and grandfather then thought of providing some education for the two children, especially the daughter Juliana, or Juli, as they called her, for she gave promise of being accomplished and beautiful. A boy who was a friend of the family, Basilio, was studying in Manila, and he was of as lowly origin as they.

But this dream seemed destined not to be realized. The first care the community took when they saw the family prospering was to appoint as cabeza de barangay its most [32]industrious member, which left only Tano, the son, who was only fourteen years old.

The father was therefore called *Cabesang* Tales and had to order a sack coat, buy a felt hat, and prepare to spend his money. In order to avoid any quarrel with the curate or the government, he settled from his own pocket the shortages in the tax-lists, paying for those who had died or moved away, and he lost considerable time in making the collections and on his trips to the capital.

“Patience! Pretend that the cayman’s relatives have joined him,” advised Tandang Selo, smiling placidly.

“Next year you’ll put on a long skirt and go to Manila to study like the young ladies of the town,” Cabesang Tales told his daughter every time he heard her talking of Basilio’s progress.

But that next year did not come, and in its stead there was another increase in the rent. Cabesang Tales became serious and scratched his head. The clay jar was giving up all its rice to the iron pot.

When the rent had risen to two hundred pesos, Tales was not content with scratching his head and sighing; he murmured and protested. The friar-administrator then told him that if he could not pay, some one else would be assigned to cultivate that land—many who desired it had offered themselves.

He thought at first that the friar was joking, but the friar was talking seriously, and indicated a servant of his to take possession of the land. Poor Tales turned pale, he felt a buzzing in his ears, he saw in the red mist that rose before his eyes his wife and daughter, pallid, emaciated, dying, victims of the intermittent fevers—then he saw the thick forest converted into productive fields, he saw the stream of sweat watering its furrows, he saw himself plowing under the hot sun, bruising his feet against the stones and roots, while this friar had been driving about in his carriage with the wretch who was to get the land following like a slave behind his master. No, a thousand [33]times, no! First let the fields sink into the depths of the earth and bury them all! Who was this intruder that he should have any right to his land? Had he brought from his own country a single handful of that soil? Had he crooked a single one of his fingers to pull up the roots that ran through it?

Exasperated by the threats of the friar, who tried to uphold his authority at any cost in the presence of the other tenants, Cabesang Tales rebelled and refused to pay a single cuarto, having ever before himself that red mist, saying that he would give up his fields to

the first man who could irrigate it with blood drawn from his own veins.

Old Selo, on looking at his son's face, did not dare to mention the cayman, but tried to calm him by talking of clay jars, reminding him that the winner in a lawsuit was left without a shirt to his back.

"We shall all be turned to clay, father, and without shirts we were born," was the reply.

So he resolutely refused to pay or to give up a single span of his land unless the friars should first prove the legality of their claim by exhibiting a title-deed of some kind. As they had none, a lawsuit followed, and Cabesang Tales entered into it, confiding that some at least, if not all, were lovers of justice and respecters of the law.

"I serve and have been serving the King with my money and my services," he said to those who remonstrated with him. "I'm asking for justice and he is obliged to give it to me."

Drawn on by fatality, and as if he had put into play in the lawsuit the whole future of himself and his children, he went on spending his savings to pay lawyers, notaries, and solicitors, not to mention the officials and clerks who exploited his ignorance and

his needs. He moved to and fro between the village and the capital, passed his days without eating and his nights without sleeping, while his talk was always about briefs, exhibits, and appeals. There was then seen a struggle such as was never before carried on under the skies of the Philippines: that of a poor Indian, [34]ignorant and friendless, confiding in the justness and righteousness of his cause, fighting against a powerful corporation before which Justice bowed her head, while the judges let fall the scales and surrendered the sword. He fought as tenaciously as the ant which bites when it knows that it is going to be crushed, as does the fly which looks into space only through a pane of glass. Yet the clay jar defying the iron pot and smashing itself into a thousand pieces bad in it something impressive—it had the sublimeness of desperation!

On the days when his journeys left him free he patrolled his fields armed with a shotgun, saying that the tulisanes were hovering around and he had need of defending himself in order not to fall into their hands and thus lose his lawsuit. As if to improve his marksmanship, he shot at birds and fruits, even the butterflies, with such accurate aim that the friar-administrator did not dare to go to Sagpang without

an escort of civil-guards, while the friar's hireling, who gazed from afar at the threatening figure of Tales wandering over the fields like a sentinel upon the walls, was terror stricken and refused to take the property away from him.

But the local judges and those at the capital, warned by the experience of one of their number who had been summarily dismissed, dared not give him the decision, fearing their own dismissal. Yet they were not really bad men, those judges, they were upright and conscientious, good citizens, excellent fathers, dutiful sons—and they were able to appreciate poor Tales' situation better than Tales himself could. Many of them were versed in the scientific and historical basis of property, they knew that the friars by their own statutes could not own property, but they also knew that to come from far across the sea with an appointment secured with great difficulty, to undertake the duties of the position with the best intentions, and now to lose it because an Indian fancied that justice had to be done on earth as in heaven—that surely was an idea! They had their [35]families and greater needs surely than that Indian: one had a mother to provide for, and what duty is more sacred than that of caring for a mother?

Another had sisters, all of marriageable age; that other there had many little children who expected their daily bread and who, like fledglings in a nest, would surely die of hunger the day he was out of a job; even the very least of them had there, far away, a wife who would be in distress if the monthly remittance failed. All these moral and conscientious judges tried everything in their power in the way of counsel, advising Cabesang Tales to pay the rent demanded. But Tales, like all simple souls, once he had seen what was just, went straight toward it. He demanded proofs, documents, papers, title-deeds, but the friars had none of these, resting their case on his concessions in the past.

Cabesang Tales' constant reply was: "If every day I give alms to a beggar to escape annoyance, who will oblige me to continue my gifts if he abuses my generosity?"

From this stand no one could draw him, nor were there any threats that could intimidate him. In vain Governor M—— made a trip expressly to talk to him and frighten him. His reply to it all was: "You may do what you like, Mr. Governor, I'm ignorant and powerless. But I've cultivated those fields, my wife and daughter died while helping me clear them, and I

won’t give them up to any one but him who can do more with them than I’ve done. Let him first irrigate them with his blood and bury in them his wife and daughter!”

The upshot of this obstinacy was that the honorable judges gave the decision to the friars, and everybody laughed at him, saying that lawsuits are not won by justice. But Cabesang Tales appealed, loaded his shotgun, and patrolled his fields with deliberation.

During this period his life seemed to be a wild dream. His son, Tano, a youth as tall as his father and as good as his sister, was conscripted, but he let the boy go rather than purchase a substitute.[36]

“I have to pay the lawyers,” he told his weeping daughter. “If I win the case I’ll find a way to get him back, and if I lose it I won’t have any need for sons.”

So the son went away and nothing more was heard of him except that his hair had been cropped and that he slept under a cart. Six months later it was rumored that he had been seen embarking for the Carolines; another report was that he had been seen in the uniform of the Civil Guard.

“Tano in the Civil Guard! *’Susmariosep*!” exclaimed several, clasping their hands. “Tano, who was so

good and so honest!*Requimternam!*”

The grandfather went many days without speaking to the father, Juli fell sick, but Cabesang Tales did not shed a single tear, although for two days he never left the house, as if he feared the looks of reproach from the whole village or that he would be called the executioner of his son. But on the third day he again sallied forth with his shotgun.

Murderous intentions were attributed to him, and there were well-meaning persons who whispered about that he had been heard to threaten that he would bury the friar-administrator in the furrows of his fields, whereat the friar was frightened at him in earnest. As a result of this, there came a decree from the Captain-General forbidding the use of firearms and ordering that they be taken up. Cabesang Tales had to hand over his shotgun but he continued his rounds armed with a long bolo.

“What are you going to do with that bolo when the tulisanes have firearms?” old Selo asked him.

“I must watch my crops,” was the answer. “Every stalk of cane growing there is one of my wife’s bones.”

The bolo was taken up on the pretext that it was too long. He then took his father's old ax and with it on his shoulder continued his sullen rounds.

Every time he left the house Tandang Selo and Juli trembled for his life. The latter would get up from her loom, go to the window, pray, make vows to the saints, and [37]recite novenas. The grandfather was at times unable to finish the handle of a broom and talked of returning to the forest—life in that house was unbearable.

At last their fears were realized. As the fields were some distance from the village, Cabesang Tales, in spite of his ax, fell into the hands of tulisanes who had revolvers and rifles. They told him that since he had money to pay judges and lawyers he must have some also for the outcasts and the hunted. They therefore demanded a ransom of five hundred pesos through the medium of a rustic, with the warning that if anything happened to their messenger, the captive would pay for it with his life. Two days of grace were allowed.

This news threw the poor family into the wildest terror, which was augmented when they learned that the Civil Guard was going out in pursuit of the

bandits. In case of an encounter, the first victim would be the captive—this they all knew. The old man was paralyzed, while the pale and frightened daughter tried often to talk but could not. Still, another thought more terrible, an idea more cruel, roused them from their stupor. The rustic sent by the tulisanes said that the band would probably have to move on, and if they were slow in sending the ransom the two days would elapse and Cabesang Tales would have his throat cut.

This drove those two beings to madness, weak and powerless as they were. Tandang Selo got up, sat down, went outside, came back again, knowing not where to go, where to seek aid. Juli appealed to her images, counted and recounted her money, but her two hundred pesos did not increase or multiply. Soon she dressed herself, gathered together all her jewels, and asked the advice of her grandfather, if she should go to see the gobernadorcillo, the judge, the notary, the lieutenant of the Civil Guard. The old man said yes to everything, or when she said no, he too said no. At length came the neighbors, their relatives and friends, some poorer than others, in their simplicity magnifying [38]the fears. The most active of all was Sister Bali, a great *panguinguera,* who had been to

Manila to practise religious exercises in the nunnery of the Sodality.

Juli was willing to sell all her jewels, except a locket set with diamonds and emeralds which Basilio had given her, for this locket had a history: a nun, the daughter of Capitan Tiago, had given it to a leper, who, in return for professional treatment, had made a present of it to Basilio. So she could not sell it without first consulting him.

Quickly the shell-combs and earrings were sold, as well as Juli's rosary, to their richest neighbor, and thus fifty pesos were added, but two hundred and fifty were still lacking. The locket might be pawned, but Juli shook her head. A neighbor suggested that the house be sold and Tandang Selo approved the idea, satisfied to return to the forest and cut firewood as of old, but Sister Bali observed that this could not be done because the owner was not present.

"The judge's wife once sold me her *tapis* for a peso, but her husband said that the sale did not hold because it hadn't received his approval. *Abá!* He took back the *tapis* and she hasn't returned the peso yet, but I don't pay her when she wins at *panguingui, abá!* In that way I've collected twelve cuartos, and

for that alone I'm going to play with her. I can't bear to have people fail to pay what they owe me, *abá!*"

Another neighbor was going to ask Sister Bali why then did not she settle a little account with her, but the quick *panguingueras*uspected this and added at once: "Do you know, Juli, what you can do? Borrow two hundred and fifty pesos on the house, payable when the lawsuit is won."

This seemed to be the best proposition, so they decided to act upon it that same day. Sister Bali offered to accompany her, and together they visited the houses of all the rich folks in Tiani, but no one would accept the proposal. The case, they said, was already lost, and to show favors to an enemy of the friars was to expose themselves to their [39]vengeance. At last a pious woman took pity on the girl and lent the money on condition that Juli should remain with her as a servant until the debt was paid. Juli would not have so very much to do: sew, pray, accompany her to mass, and fast for her now and then. The girl accepted with tears in her eyes, received the money, and promised to enter her service on the following day, Christmas.

When the grandfather heard of that sale he fell to weeping like a child. What, that granddaughter whom he had not allowed to walk in the sun lest her skin should be burned, Juli, she of the delicate fingers and rosy feet! What, that girl, the prettiest in the village and perhaps in the whole town, before whose window many gallants had vainly passed the night playing and singing! What, his only granddaughter, the sole joy of his fading eyes, she whom he had dreamed of seeing dressed in a long skirt, talking Spanish, and holding herself erect waving a painted fan like the daughters of the wealthy—she to become a servant, to be scolded and reprimanded, to ruin her fingers, to sleep anywhere, to rise in any manner whatsoever!

So the old grandfather wept and talked of hanging or starving himself to death. “If you go,” he declared, “I’m going back to the forest and will never set foot in the town.”

Juli soothed him by saying that it was necessary for her father to return, that the suit would be won, and they could then ransom her from her servitude.

The night was a sad one. Neither of the two could taste a bite and the old man refused to lie down,

passing the whole night seated in a corner, silent and motionless. Juli on her part tried to sleep, but for a long time could not close her eyes. Somewhat relieved about her father's fate, she now thought of herself and fell to weeping, but stifled her sobs so that the old man might not hear them. The next day she would be a servant, and it was the very day Basilio was accustomed to come from Manila with presents for her. Henceforward she would have to give up that love; Basilio, who was going to be a doctor, couldn't marry a [40]pauper. In fancy she saw him going to the church in company with the prettiest and richest girl in the town, both well-dressed, happy and smiling, while she, Juli, followed her mistress, carrying novenas, buyos, and the cuspidor. Here the girl felt a lump rise in her throat, a sinking at her heart, and begged the Virgin to let her die first.

But—said her conscience—he will at least know that I preferred to pawn myself rather than the locket he gave me.

This thought consoled her a little and brought on empty dreams. Who knows but that a miracle might happen? She might find the two hundred and fifty pesos under the image of the Virgin—she had read of many similar miracles. The sun might not rise nor

morning come, and meanwhile the suit would be won. Her father might return, or Basilio put in his appearance, she might find a bag of gold in the garden, the tulisanes would send the bag of gold, the curate, Padre Camorra, who was always teasing her, would come with the tulisanes. So her ideas became more and more confused, until at length, worn out by fatigue and sorrow, she went to sleep with dreams of her childhood in the depths of the forest: she was bathing in the torrent along with her two brothers, there were little fishes of all colors that let themselves be caught like fools, and she became impatient because she found no pleasure in catchnig such foolish little fishes! Basilio was under the water, but Basilio for some reason had the face of her brother Tano. Her new mistress was watching them from the bank.[41]

[1] The reference is to the novel *Noli Me Tangere* (*The Social Cancer*), the author's first work, of which, the present is in a way a continuation.—Tr.

A Cochero's Christmas Eve

Basilio reached San Diego just as the Christmas Eve procession was passing through the streets. He had been delayed on the road for several hours because the cochero, having forgotten his cedula, was held up by the Civil Guard, had his memory jogged by a few blows from a rifle-butt, and afterwards was taken before the commandant. Now the carromata was again detained to let the procession pass, while the abused cochero took off his hat reverently and recited a paternoster to the first image that came along, which seemed to be that of a great saint. It was the figure of an old man with an exceptionally long beard, seated at the edge of a grave under a tree filled with all kinds of stuffed birds. A *kalan* with a clay jar, a mortar, and a *kalikut* for mashing buyo were his only utensils, as if to indicate that he lived on the border of the tomb and was doing his cooking there. This was the Methuselah of the religious iconography of the Philippines; his colleague and perhaps contemporary is called in Europe Santa Claus, and is still more smiling and agreeable.

"In the time of the saints," thought the cochero, "surely there were no civil-guards, because one can't live long on blows from rifle-butts."

Behind the great old man came the three Magian Kings on ponies that were capering about, especially that of the negro Melchior, which seemed to be about to trample its companions.

“No, there couldn’t have been any civil-guards,” decided the cochero, secretly envying those fortunate times, “because if there had been, that negro who is cutting up [42]such capers beside those two Spaniards”—Gaspar and Bathazar—“would have gone to jail.”

Then, observing that the negro wore a crown and was a king, like the other two, the Spaniards, his thoughts naturally turned to the king of the Indians, and he sighed. “Do you know, sir,” he asked Basilio respectfully, “if his right foot is loose yet?”

Basilio had him repeat the question. “Whose right foot?”

“The King’s!” whispered the cochero mysteriously.

“What King’s?”

“Our King’s, the King of the Indians.”

Basilio smiled and shrugged his shoulders, while the cochero again sighed. The Indians in the country places preserve the legend that their king, imprisoned

and chained in the cave of San Mateo, will come some day to free them. Every hundredth year he breaks one of his chains, so that he now has his hands and his left foot loose—only the right foot remains bound. This king causes the earthquakes when he struggles or stirs himself, and he is so strong that in shaking hands with him it is necessary to extend to him a bone, which he crushes in his grasp. For some unexplainable reason the Indians call him King Bernardo, perhaps by confusing him with Bernardo del Carpio.[1]

"When he gets his right foot loose," muttered the cochero, stifling another sigh, "I'll give him my horses, and offer him my services even to death, for he'll free us from the Civil Guard." With a melancholy gaze he watched the Three Kings move on.[43]

The boys came behind in two files, sad and serious as though they were there under compulsion. They lighted their way, some with torches, others with tapers, and others with paper lanterns on bamboo poles, while they recited the rosary at the top of their voices, as though quarreling with somebody. Afterwards came St. Joseph on a modest float, with a look of sadness and resignation on his face, carrying

his stalk of lilies, as he moved along between two civil-guards as though he were a prisoner. This enabled the cochero to understand the expression on the saint's face, but whether the sight of the guards troubled him or he had no great respect for a saint who would travel in such company, he did not recite a single requiem.

Behind St. Joseph came the girls bearing lights, their heads covered with handkerchiefs knotted under their chins, also reciting the rosary, but with less wrath than the boys. In their midst were to be seen several lads dragging along little rabbits made of Japanese paper, lighted by red candles, with their short paper tails erect. The lads brought those toys into the procession to enliven the birth of the Messiah. The little animals, fat and round as eggs, seemed to be so pleased that at times they would take a leap, lose their balance, fall, and catch fire. The owner would then hasten to extinguish such burning enthusiasm, puffing and blowing until he finally beat out the fire, and then, seeing his toy destroyed, would fall to weeping. The cochero observed with sadness that the race of little paper animals disappeared each year, as if they had been attacked by the pest like the living animals. He, the abused Sinong, remembered his two

magnificent horses, which, at the advice of the curate, he had caused to be blessed to save them from plague, spending therefor ten pesos—for neither the government nor the curates have found any better remedy for the epizootic—and they had died after all. Yet he consoled himself by remembering also that after the shower of holy water, the Latin phrases of the padre, and the ceremonies, the horses had become so vain and self-important that [44]they would not even allow him, Sinong, a good Christian, to put them in harness, and he had not dared to whip them, because a tertiary sister had said that they were *sanctified*.

The procession was closed by the Virgin dressed as the Divine Shepherd, with a pilgrim's hat of wide brim and long plumes to indicate the journey to Jerusalem. That the birth might be made more explicable, the curate had ordered her figure to be stuffed with rags and cotton under her skirt, so that no one could be in any doubt as to her condition. It was a very beautiful image, with the same sad expression of all the images that the Filipinos make, and a mien somewhat ashamed, doubtless at the way in which the curate had arranged her. In front came several singers and behind, some musicians with the usual civil-guards. The curate, as was to be expected

after what he had done, was not in his place, for that year he was greatly displeased at having to use all his diplomacy and shrewdness to convince the townspeople that they should pay thirty pesos for each Christmas mass instead of the usual twenty. “You’re turning filibusters!” he had said to them.

The cochero must have been greatly preoccupied with the sights of the procession, for when it had passed and Basilio ordered him to go on, he did not notice that the lamp on his carromata had gone out. Neither did Basilio notice it, his attention being devoted to gazing at the houses, which were illuminated inside and out with little paper lanterns of fantastic shapes and colors, stars surrounded by hoops with long streamers which produced a pleasant murmur when shaken by the wind, and fishes of movable heads and tails, having a glass of oil inside, suspended from the eaves of the windows in the delightful fashion of a happy and homelike fiesta. But he also noticed that the lights were flickering, that the stars were being eclipsed, that this year had fewer ornaments and hangings than the former, which in turn had had even fewer than the year preceding it. There was scarcely any music in the streets, while the agreeable noises of the kitchen were

not to be heard in all [45]the houses, which the youth ascribed to the fact that for some time things had been going badly, the sugar did not bring a good price, the rice crops had failed, over half the live stock had died, but the taxes rose and increased for some inexplicable reason, while the abuses of the Civil Guard became more frequent to kill off the happiness of the people in the towns.

He was just pondering over this when an energetic “Halt!” resounded. They were passing in front of the barracks and one of the guards had noticed the extinguished lamp of the carromata, which could not go on without it. A hail of insults fell about the poor cochero, who vainly excused himself with the length of the procession. He would be arrested for violating the ordinances and afterwards advertised in the newspapers, so the peaceful and prudent Basilio left the carromata and went his way on foot, carrying his valise. This was San Diego, his native town, where he had not a single relative.

The only, house wherein there seemed to be any mirth was Capitan Basilio’s. Hens and chickens cackled their death chant to the accompaniment of dry and repeated strokes, as of meat pounded on a chopping-block, and the sizzling of grease in the

frying-pans. A feast was going on in the house, and even into the street there passed a certain draught of air, saturated with the succulent odors of stews and confections. In the entresol Basilio saw Sinang, as small as when our readers knew her before,[2] although a little rounder and plumper since her marriage. Then to his great surprise he made out, further in at the back of the room, chatting with Capitan Basilio, the curate, and the alferez of the Civil Guard, no less than the jeweler Simoun, as ever with his blue goggles and his nonchalant air.

"It's understood, Señor Simoun," Capitan Basilio was saying, "that we'll go to Tiani to see your jewels."

"I would also go," remarked the alferez, "because I [46]need a watch-chain, but I'm so busy—if Capitan Basilio would undertake—"

Capitan Basilio would do so with the greatest pleasure, and as he wished to propitiate the soldier in order that he might not be molested in the persons of his laborers, he refused to accept the money which the alferez was trying to get out of his pocket.

"It's my Christmas gift!"

"I can't allow you, Capitan, I can't permit it!"

“All right! We’ll settle up afterwards,” replied Capitan Basilio with a lordly gesture.

Also, the curate wanted a pair of lady’s earrings and requested the capitan to buy them for him. “I want them first class. Later we’ll fix up the account.”

“Don’t worry about that, Padre,” said the good man, who wished to be at peace with the Church also. An unfavorable report on the curate’s part could do him great damage and cause him double the expense, for those earrings were a forced present. Simoun in the meantime was praising his jewels.

“That fellow is fierce!” mused the student. “He does business everywhere. And if I can believe *a certain person,* he buys from some gentlemen for a half of their value the same jewels that he himself has sold for presents. Everybody in this country prospers but us!”

He made his way to his house, or rather Capitan Tiago’s, now occupied by a trustworthy man who had held him in great esteem since the day when he had seen him perform a surgical operation with the same coolness that he would cut up a chicken. This man was now waiting to give him the news. Two of the

laborers were prisoners, one was to be deported, and a number of carabaos had died.

“The same old story,” exclaimed Basilio, in a bad humor. “You always receive me with the same complaints.” The youth was not overbearing, but as he was at times scolded by Capitan Tiago, he liked in his turn to chide those under his orders.[47]

The old man cast about for something new. “One of our tenants has died, the old fellow who took care of the woods, and the curate refused to bury him as a pauper, saying that his master is a rich man.”

“What did he die of?”

“Of old age.”

“Get out! To die of old age! It must at least have been some disease.” Basilio in his zeal for making autopsies wanted diseases.

“Haven’t you anything new to tell me? You take away my appetite relating the same old things. Do you know anything of Sagpang?”

The old man then told him about the kidnapping of Cabesang Tales. Basilio became thoughtful and said nothing more—his appetite had completely left him.[48]

[1] This legend is still current among the Tagalogs. It circulates in various forms, the commonest being that the king was so confined for defying the lightning; and it takes no great stretch of the imagination to fancy in this idea a reference to the firearms used by the Spanish conquerors. Quite recently (January 1909), when the nearly extinct volcano of Banahao shook itself and scattered a few tons of mud over the surrounding landscape, the people thereabout recalled this old legend, saying that it was their King Bernardo making another effort to get that right foot loose.—Tr.

[2] The reference is to *Noli Me Tangere,* in which Sinang appears.

Basilio

When the bells began their chimes for the midnight mass and those who preferred a good sleep to fiestas and ceremonies arose grumbling at the noise and movement, Basilio cautiously left the house, took two or three turns through the streets to see that he was not watched or followed, and then made his way by unfrequented paths to the road that led to the ancient wood of the Ibarras, which had been acquired by Capitan Tiago when their property was confiscated and sold. As Christmas fell under the waning moon that year, the place was wrapped in darkness. The chimes had ceased, and only the tolling sounded through the darkness of the night amid the murmur of the breeze-stirred branches and the measured roar of the waves on the neighboring lake, like the deep respiration of nature sunk in profound sleep.

Awed by the time and place, the youth moved along with his head down, as if endeavoring to see through the darkness. But from time to time he raised it to gaze at the stars through the open spaces between the treetops and went forward parting the bushes or tearing away the lianas that obstructed his path. At times he retraced his steps, his foot would get caught

among the plants, he stumbled over a projecting root or a fallen log. At the end of a half-hour he reached a small brook on the opposite side of which arose a hillock, a black and shapeless mass that in the darkness took on the proportions of a mountain. Basilio crossed the brook on the stones that showed black against the shining surface of the water, ascended the hill, and made his way to a small space enclosed by old and [49]crumbling walls. He approached the balete tree that rose in the center, huge, mysterious, venerable, formed of roots that extended up and down among the confusedly-interlaced trunks.

Pausing before a heap of stones he took off his hat and seemed to be praying. There his mother was buried, and every time he came to the town his first visit was to that neglected and unknown grave. Since he must visit Cabesang Tales' family the next day, he had taken advantage of the night to perform this duty. Seated on a stone, he seemed to fall into deep thought. His past rose before him like a long black film, rosy at first, then shadowy with spots of blood, then black, black, gray, and then light, ever lighter. The end could not be seen, hidden as it was by a

cloud through which shone lights and the hues of dawn.

Thirteen years before to the day, almost to the hour, his mother had died there in the deepest distress, on a glorious night when the moon shone brightly and the Christians of the world were engaged in rejoicing. Wounded and limping, he had reached there in pursuit of her—she mad and terrified, fleeing from her son as from a ghost. There she had died, and there had come a stranger who had commanded him to build a funeral pyre. He had obeyed mechanically and when he returned he found a second stranger by the side of the other's corpse. What a night and what a morning those were! The stranger helped him raise the pyre, whereon they burned the corpse of the first, dug the grave in which they buried his mother, and then after giving him some pieces of money told him to leave the place. It was the first time that he had seen that man—tall, with blood-shot eyes, pale lips, and a sharp nose.

Entirely alone in the world, without parents or brothers and sisters, he left the town whose authorities inspired in him such great fear and went to Manila to work in some rich house and study at the same time, as many do. His journey was an Odyssey

of sleeplessness and startling surprises, in which hunger counted for little, for he ate the [50]fruits in the woods, whither he retreated whenever he made out from afar the uniform of the Civil Guard, a sight that recalled the origin of all his misfortunes. Once in Manila, ragged and sick, he went from door to door offering his services. A boy from the provinces who knew not a single word of Spanish, and sickly besides! Discouraged, hungry, and miserable, he wandered about the streets, attracting attention by the wretchedness of his clothing. How often was he tempted to throw himself under the feet of the horses that flashed by, drawing carriages shining with silver and varnish, thus to end his misery at once! Fortunately, he saw Capitan Tiago, accompanied by Aunt Isabel. He had known them since the days in San Diego, and in his joy believed that in them he saw almost fellow-townsfolk. He followed the carriage until he lost sight of it, and then made inquiries for the house. As it was the very day that Maria Clara entered the nunnery and Capitan Tiago was accordingly depressed, he was admitted as a servant, without pay, but instead with leave to study, if he so wished, in San Juan de Letran.[1]

Dirty, poorly dressed, with only a pair of clogs for footwear, at the end of several months' stay in Manila, he entered the first year of Latin. On seeing his clothes, his classmates drew away from him, and the professor, a handsome Dominican, never asked him a question, but frowned every time he looked at him. In the eight months that the class continued, the only words that passed between them were his name read from the roll and the daily *adsum* with which the student responded. With what bitterness he left the class each day, and, guessing the reason for the treatment accorded him, what tears sprang into his eyes and what complaints were stifled in his heart! How he had wept and sobbed over the grave of his mother, relating to her his hidden sorrows, humiliations, and affronts, when at the approach of Christmas Capitan Tiago had taken him back to San Diego! Yet he memorized the lessons without [51]omitting a comma, although he understood scarcely any part of them. But at length he became resigned, noticing that among the three or four hundred in his class only about forty merited the honor of being questioned, because they attracted the professor's attention by their appearance, some prank, comicality, or other cause. The greater part of the students congratulated themselves that they thus

escaped the work of thinking and understanding the subject. “One goes to college, not to learn and study, but to gain credit for the course, so if the book can be memorized, what more can be asked—the year is thus gained.”[2]

Basilio passed the examinations by answering the solitary question asked him, like a machine, without stopping or breathing, and in the amusement of the examiners won the passing certificate. His nine companions—they were examined in batches of ten in order to save time—did not have such good luck, but were condemned to repeat the year of brutalization.

In the second year the game-cock that he tended won a [52]large sum and he received from Capitan Tiago a big tip, which he immediately invested in the purchase of shoes and a felt hat. With these and the clothes given him by his employer, which he made over to fit his person, his appearance became more decent, but did not get beyond that. In such a large class a great deal was needed to attract the professor’s attention, and the student who in the first year did not make himself known by some special quality, or did not capture the good-will of the professors, could with difficulty make himself known

in the rest of his school-days. But Basilio kept on, for perseverance was his chief trait.

His fortune seemed to change somewhat when he entered the third year. His professor happened to be a very jolly fellow, fond of jokes and of making the students laugh, complacent enough in that he almost always had his favorites recite the lessons—in fact, he was satisfied with anything. At this time Basilio now wore shoes and a clean and well-ironed camisa. As his professor noticed that he laughed very little at the jokes and that his large eyes seemed to be asking something like an eternal question, he took him for a fool, and one day decided to make him conspicuous by calling on him for the lesson. Basilio recited it from beginning to end, without hesitating over a single letter, so the professor called him a parrot and told a story to make the class laugh. Then to increase the hilarity and justify the epithet he asked several questions, at the same time winking to his favorites, as if to say to them, “You’ll see how we’re going to amuse ourselves.”

Basilio now understood Spanish and answered the questions with the plain intention of making no one laugh. This disgusted everybody, the expected absurdity did not materialize, no one could laugh, and

the good friar never pardoned him for having defrauded the hopes of the class and disappointed his own prophecies. But who would expect anything worth while to come from a head so badly combed and placed on an Indian poorly shod, classified until recently among the arboreal animals? As in other [53]centers of learning, where the teachers are honestly desirous that the students should learn, such discoveries usually delight the instructors, so in a college managed by men convinced that for the most part knowledge is an evil, at least for the students, the episode of Basilio produced a bad impression and he was not questioned again during the year. Why should he be, when he made no one laugh?

Quite discouraged and thinking of abandoning his studies, he passed to the fourth year of Latin. Why study at all, why not sleep like the others and trust to luck?

One of the two professors was very popular, beloved by all, passing for a sage, a great poet, and a man of advanced ideas. One day when he accompanied the collegians on their walk, he had a dispute with some cadets, which resulted in a skirmish and a challenge. No doubt recalling his brilliant youth, the professor preached a crusade and promised good marks to all

who during the promenade on the following Sunday would take part in the fray. The week was a lively one—there were occasional encounters in which canes and sabers were crossed, and in one of these Basilio distinguished himself. Borne in triumph by the students and presented to the professor, he thus became known to him and came to be his favorite. Partly for this reason and partly from his diligence, that year he received the highest marks, medals included, in view of which Capitan Tiago, who, since his daughter had become a nun, exhibited some aversion to the friars, in a fit of good humor induced him to transfer to the Ateneo Municipal, the fame of which was then in its apogee.

Here a new world opened before his eyes—a system of instruction that he had never dreamed of. Except for a few superfluities and some childish things, he was filled with admiration for the methods there used and with gratitude for the zeal of the instructors. His eyes at times filled with tears when he thought of the four previous years during which, from lack of means, he had been unable to study at that center. He had to make extraordinary efforts to get [54]himself to the level of those who had had a good preparatory course, and it might be said that in that one year he

learned the whole five of the secondary curricula. He received his bachelor's degree, to the great satisfaction of his instructors, who in the examinations showed themselves to be proud of him before the Dominican examiners sent there to inspect the school. One of these, as if to dampen such great enthusiasm a little, asked him where he had studied the first years of Latin.

"In San Juan de Letran, Padre," answered Basilio.

"Aha! Of course! He's not bad,—in Latin," the Dominican then remarked with a slight smile.

From choice and temperament he selected the course in medicine. Capitan Tiago preferred the law, in order that he might have a lawyer free, but knowledge of the laws is not sufficient to secure clientage in the Philippines—it is necessary to win the cases, and for this friendships are required, influence in certain spheres, a good deal of astuteness. Capitan Tiago finally gave in, remembering that medical students get on intimate terms with corpses, and for some time he had been seeking a poison to put on the gaffs of his game-cocks, the best he had been able to secure thus far being the blood of a Chinaman who had died of syphilis.

With equal diligence, or more if possible, the young man continued this course, and after the third year began to render medical services with such great success that he was not only preparing a brilliant future for himself but also earning enough to dress well and save some money. This was the last year of the course and in two months he would be a physician; he would come back to the town, he would marry Juliana, and they would be happy. The granting of his licentiateship was not only assured, but he expected it to be the crowning act of his school-days, for he had been designated to deliver the valedictory at the graduation, and already he saw himself in the rostrum, before the whole faculty, the object of public attention. All [55]those heads, leaders of Manila science, half-hidden in their colored capes; all the women who came there out of curiosity and who years before had gazed at him, if not with disdain, at least with indifference; all those men whose carriages had once been about to crush him down in the mud like a dog: they would listen attentively, and he was going to say something to them that would not be trivial, something that had never before resounded in that place, he was going to forget himself in order to aid the poor students of the

future—and he would make his entrance on his work in the world with that speech.[56]

[1] The Dominican school of secondary instruction in Manila.—Tr.

[2] "The studies of secondary instruction given in Santo Tomas, in the college of San Juan de Letran, and of San José, and in the private schools, had the defects inherent in the plan of instruction which the friars developed in the Philippines. It suited their plans that scientific and literary knowledge should not become general nor very extensive, for which reason they took but little interest in the study of those subjects or in the quality of the instruction. Their educational establishments were places of luxury for the children of wealthy and well-to-do families rather than establishments in which to perfect and develop the minds of the Filipino youth. It is true they were careful to give them a religious education, tending to make them respect the omnipotent power (*sic*) of the monastic corporations.

"The intellectual powers were made dormant by devoting a greater part of the time to the study of Latin, to which they attached an extraordinary importance, for the purpose of discouraging pupils from studying the exact and experimental sciences and from gaining a knowledge of true literary studies.

"The philosophic system explained was naturally the scholastic one, with an exceedingly refined and subtile logic, and with deficient ideas upon physics. By the study of Latin, and their philosophic systems, they converted their pupils into automatic machines rather than into practical men prepared to battle with life."—*Census of the Philippine Islands (Washington, 1905), Volume III, pp. 601, 602.*

Simoun

Over these matters Basilio was pondering as he visited his mother's grave. He was about to start back to the town when he thought he saw a light flickering among the trees and heard the snapping of twigs, the sound of feet, and rustling of leaves. The light disappeared but the noises became more distinct, coming directly toward where he was. Basilio was not naturally superstitious, especially after having carved up so many corpses and watched beside so many death-beds, but the old legends about that ghostly spot, the hour, the darkness, the melancholy sighing of the wind, and certain tales heard in his childhood, asserted their influence over his mind and made his heart beat violently.

The figure stopped on the other side of the balete, but the youth could see it through an open space between two roots that had grown in the course of time to the proportions of tree-trunks. It produced from under its coat a lantern with a powerful reflecting lens, which it placed on the ground, thereby lighting up a pair of riding-boots, the rest of the figure remaining concealed in the darkness. The figure seemed to search its pockets and then bent over to fix a shovel-blade on the end of a stout cane. To his great surprise

Basilio thought he could make out some of the features of the jeweler Simoun, who indeed it was.

The jeweler dug in the ground and from time to time the lantern illuminated his face, on which were not now the blue goggles that so completely disguised him. Basilio shuddered: that was the same stranger who thirteen years before had dug his mother's grave there, only now he had aged somewhat, his hair had turned white, he wore a beard [57]and a mustache, but yet his look was the same, the bitter expression, the same cloud on his brow, the same muscular arms, though somewhat thinner now, the same violent energy. Old impressions were stirred in the boy: he seemed to feel the heat of the fire, the hunger, the weariness of that time, the smell of freshly turned earth. Yet his discovery terrified him—that jeweler Simoun, who passed for a British Indian, a Portuguese, an American, a mulatto, the Brown Cardinal, his Black Eminence, the evil genius of the Captain-General as many called him, was no other than the mysterious stranger whose appearance and disappearance coincided with the death of the heir to that land! But of the two strangers who had appeared, which was Ibarra, the living or the dead?

This question, which he had often asked himself whenever Ibarra's death was mentioned, again came into his mind in the presence of the human enigma he now saw before him. The dead man had had two wounds, which must have been made by firearms, as he knew from what he had since studied, and which would be the result of the chase on the lake. Then the dead man must have been Ibarra, who had come to die at the tomb of his forefathers, his desire to be cremated being explained by his residence in Europe, where cremation is practised. Then who was the other, the living, this jeweler Simoun, at that time with such an appearance of poverty and wretchedness, but who had now returned loaded with gold and a friend of the authorities? There was the mystery, and the student, with his characteristic cold-bloodedness, determined to clear it up at the first opportunity.

Simoun dug away for some time, but Basilio noticed that his old vigor had declined—he panted and had to rest every few moments. Fearing that he might be discovered, the boy made a sudden resolution. Rising from his seat and issuing from his hiding-place, he asked in the most matter-of-fact tone, "Can I help you, sir?"

Simoun straightened up with the spring of a tiger [58]attacked at his prey, thrust his hand in his coat pocket, and stared at the student with a pale and lowering gaze.

“Thirteen years ago you rendered me a great service, sir,” went on Basilio unmoved, “in this very place, by burying my mother, and I should consider myself happy if I could serve you now.”

Without taking his eyes off the youth Simoun drew a revolver from his pocket and the click of a hammer being cocked was heard. “For whom do you take me?” he asked, retreating a few paces.

“For a person who is sacred to me,” replied Basilio with some emotion, for he thought his last moment had come. “For a person whom all, except me, believe to be dead, and whose misfortunes I have always lamented.”

An impressive silence followed these words, a silence that to the youth seemed to suggest eternity. But Simoun, after some hesitation, approached him and placing a hand on his shoulder said in a moving tone: “Basilio, you possess a secret that can ruin me and now you have just surprised me in another, which puts me completely in your hands, the

divulging of which would upset all my plans. For my own security and for the good of the cause in which I labor, I ought to seal your lips forever, for what is the life of one man compared to the end I seek? The occasion is fitting; no one knows that I have come here; I am armed; you are defenceless; your death would be attributed to the outlaws, if not to more supernatural causes—yet I'll let you live and trust that I shall not regret it. You have toiled, you have struggled with energetic perseverance, and like myself, you have your scores to settle with society. Your brother was murdered, your mother driven to insanity, and society has prosecuted neither the assassin nor the executioner. You and I are the dregs of justice and instead of destroying we ought to aid each other."

Simoun paused with a repressed sigh, and then slowly resumed, while his gaze wandered about: "Yes, I am he who came here thirteen years ago, sick and wretched, to pay [59]the last tribute to a great and noble soul that was willing to die for me. The victim of a vicious system, I have wandered over the world, working night and day to amass a fortune and carry out my plan. Now I have returned to destroy that system, to precipitate its downfall, to hurl it into the

abyss toward which it is senselessly rushing, even though I may have to shed oceans of tears and blood. It has condemned itself, it stands condemned, and I don't want to die before I have seen it in fragments at the foot of the precipice!"

Simoun extended both his arms toward the earth, as if with that gesture he would like to hold there the broken remains. His voice took on a sinister, even lugubrious tone, which made the student shudder.

"Called by the vices of the rulers, I have returned to these islands, and under the cloak of a merchant have visited the towns. My gold has opened a way for me and wheresoever I have beheld greed in the most execrable forms, sometimes hypocritical, sometimes shameless, sometimes cruel, fatten on the dead organism, like a vulture on a corpse, I have asked myself—why was there not, festering in its vitals, the corruption, the ptomaine, the poison of the tombs, to kill the foul bird? The corpse was letting itself be consumed, the vulture was gorging itself with meat, and because it was not possible for me to give it life so that it might turn against its destroyer, and because the corruption developed slowly, I have stimulated greed, I have abetted it. The cases of injustice and the abuses multiplied themselves; I have instigated crime

and acts of cruelty, so that the people might become accustomed to the idea of death. I have stirred up trouble so that to escape from it some remedy might be found; I have placed obstacles in the way of trade so that the country, impoverished and reduced to misery, might no longer be afraid of anything; I have excited desires to plunder the treasury, and as this has not been enough to bring about a popular uprising, I have wounded the people in their most sensitive fiber; I have [60]made the vulture itself insult the very corpse that it feeds upon and hasten the corruption.

"Now, when I was about to get the supreme rottenness, the supreme filth, the mixture of such foul products brewing poison, when the greed was beginning to irritate, in its folly hastening to seize whatever came to hand, like an old woman caught in a conflagration, here you come with your cries of Hispanism, with chants of confidence in the government, in what cannot come to pass, here you have a body palpitating with heat and life, young, pure, vigorous, throbbing with blood, with enthusiasm, suddenly come forth to offer itself again as fresh food!

"Ah, youth is ever inexperienced and dreamy, always running after the butterflies and flowers! You have

united, so that by your efforts you may bind your fatherland to Spain with garlands of roses when in reality you are forging upon it chains harder than the diamond! You ask for equal rights, the Hispanization of your customs, and you don't see that what you are begging for is suicide, the destruction of your nationality, the annihilation of your fatherland, the consecration of tyranny! What will you be in the future? A people without character, a nation without liberty—everything you have will be borrowed, even your very defects! You beg for Hispanization, and do not pale with shame when they deny it you! And even if they should grant it to you, what then—what have you gained? At best, a country of pronunciamentos, a land of civil wars, a republic of the greedy and the malcontents, like some of the republics of South America! To what are you tending now, with your instruction in Castilian, a pretension that would be ridiculous were it not for its deplorable consequences! You wish to add one more language to the forty odd that are spoken in the islands, so that you may understand one another less and less."

"On the contrary," replied Basilio, "if the knowledge of Castilian may bind us to the government, in

exchange it may also unite the islands among themselves."[61]

"A gross error!" rejoined Simoun. "You are letting yourselves be deceived by big words and never go to the bottom of things to examine the results in their final analysis. Spanish will never be the general language of the country, the people will never talk it, because the conceptions of their brains and the feelings of their hearts cannot be expressed in that language—each people has its own tongue, as it has its own way of thinking! What are you going to do with Castilian, the few of you who will speak it? Kill off your own originality, subordinate your thoughts to other brains, and instead of freeing yourselves, make yourselves slaves indeed! Nine-tenths of those of you who pretend to be enlightened are renegades to your country! He among you who talks that language neglects his own in such a way that he neither writes nor understands it, and how many have I not seen who pretended not to know a single word of it! But fortunately, you have an imbecile government! While Russia enslaves Poland by forcing the Russian language upon it, while Germany prohibits French in the conquered provinces, your government strives to preserve yours, and you in return, a remarkable

people under an incredible government, you are trying to despoil yourselves of your own nationality! One and all you forget that while a people preserves its language, it preserves the marks of its liberty, as a man preserves his independence while he holds to his own way of thinking. Language is the thought of the peoples. Luckily, your independence is assured; human passions are looking out for that!”

Simoun paused and rubbed his hand over his forehead. The waning moon was rising and sent its faint light down through the branches of the trees, and with his white locks and severe features, illuminated from below by the lantern, the jeweler appeared to be the fateful spirit of the wood planning some evil.

Basilio was silent before such bitter reproaches and listened with bowed head, while Simoun resumed: “I saw this movement started and have passed whole nights of [62]anguish, because I understood that among those youths there were exceptional minds and hearts, sacrificing themselves for what they thought to be a good cause, when in reality they were working against their own country. How many times have I wished to speak to you young men, to reveal myself and undeceive you! But in view of the

reputation I enjoy, my words would have been wrongly interpreted and would perhaps have had a counter effect. How many times have I not longed to approach your Makaraig, your Isagani! Sometimes I thought of their death, I wished to destroy them—”

Simoun checked himself.

“Here’s why I let you live, Basilio, and by such imprudence I expose myself to the risk of being some day betrayed by you. But you know who I am, you know how much I must have suffered—then believe in me! You are not of the common crowd, which sees in the jeweler Simoun the trader who incites the authorities to commit abuses in order that the abused may buy jewels. I am the Judge who wishes to castigate this system by making use of its own defects, to make war on it by flattering it. I need your help, your influence among the youth, to combat these senseless desires for Hispanization, for assimilation, for equal rights. By that road you will become only a poor copy, and the people should look higher. It is madness to attempt to influence the thoughts of the rulers—they have their plan outlined, the bandage covers their eyes, and besides losing time uselessly, you are deceiving the people with vain hopes and are helping to bend their necks before

the tyrant. What you should do is to take advantage of their prejudices to serve your needs. Are they unwilling that you be assimilated with the Spanish people? Good enough! Distinguish yourselves then by revealing yourselves in your own character, try to lay the foundations of the Philippine fatherland! Do they deny you hope? Good! Don't depend on them, depend upon yourselves and work! Do they deny you representation [63]in their Cortes? So much the better! Even should you succeed in sending representatives of your own choice, what are you going to accomplish there except to be overwhelmed among so many voices, and sanction with your presence the abuses and wrongs that are afterwards perpetrated? The fewer rights they allow you, the more reason you will have later to throw off the yoke, and return evil for evil. If they are unwilling to teach you their language, cultivate your own, extend it, preserve to the people their own way of thinking, and instead of aspiring to be a province, aspire to be a nation! Instead of subordinate thoughts, think independently, to the end that neither by right, nor custom, nor language, the Spaniard can be considered the master here, nor even be looked upon as a part of the country, but ever as an invader, a foreigner, and

sooner or later you will have your liberty! Here's why I let you live!"

Basilio breathed freely, as though a great weight had been lifted from him, and after a brief pause, replied: "Sir, the honor you do me in confiding your plans to me is too great for me not to be frank with you, and tell you that what you ask of me is beyond my power. I am no politician, and if I have signed the petition for instruction in Castilian it has been because I saw in it an advantage to our studies and nothing more. My destiny is different; my aspiration reduces itself to alleviating the physical sufferings of my fellow men."

The jeweler smiled. "What are physical sufferings compared to moral tortures? What is the death of a man in the presence of the death of a society? Some day you will perhaps be a great physician, if they let you go your way in peace, but greater yet will be he who can inject a new idea into this anemic people! You, what are you doing for the land that gave you existence, that supports your life, that affords you knowledge? Don't you realize that that is a useless life which is not consecrated to a great idea? It is a stone wasted in the fields without becoming a part of any edifice."[64]

“No, no, sir!” replied Basilio modestly, “I’m not folding my arms, I’m working like all the rest to raise up from the ruins of the past a people whose units will be bound together—that each one may feel in himself the conscience and the life of the whole. But however enthusiastic our generation may be, we understand that in this great social fabric there must be a division of labor. I have chosen my task and will devote myself to science.”

“Science is not the end of man,” declared Simoun.

“The most civilized nations are tending toward it.”

“Yes, but only as a means of seeking their welfare.”

“Science is more eternal, it’s more human, it’s more universal!” exclaimed the youth in a transport of enthusiasm. “Within a few centuries, when humanity has become redeemed and enlightened, when there are no races, when all peoples are free, when there are neither tyrants nor slaves, colonies nor mother countries, when justice rules and man is a citizen of the world, the pursuit of science alone will remain, the word patriotism will be equivalent to fanaticism, and he who prides himself on patriotic ideas will doubtless be isolated as a dangerous disease, as a menace to the social order.”

Simoun smiled sadly. “Yes, yes,” he said with a shake of his head, “yet to reach that condition it is necessary that there be no tyrannical and no enslaved peoples, it is necessary that man go about freely, that he know how to respect the rights of others in their own individuality, and for this there is yet much blood to be shed, the struggle forces itself forward. To overcome the ancient fanaticism that bound consciences it was necessary that many should perish in the holocausts, so that the social conscience in horror declared the individual conscience free. It is also necessary that all answer the question which with each day the fatherland asks them, with its fettered hands extended! Patriotism can only be a crime in a tyrannical people, because then it is rapine under a beautiful name, but however [65]perfect humanity may become, patriotism will always be a virtue among oppressed peoples, because it will at all times mean love of justice, of liberty, of personal dignity—nothing of chimerical dreams, of effeminate idyls! The greatness of a man is not in living before his time, a thing almost impossible, but in understanding its desires, in responding to its needs, and in guiding it on its forward way. The geniuses that are commonly believed to have existed before their time, only appear so because those who judge

them see from a great distance, or take as representative of the age the line of stragglers!”

Simoun fell silent. Seeing that he could awake no enthusiasm in that unresponsive mind, he turned to another subject and asked with a change of tone: “And what are you doing for the memory of your mother and your brother? Is it enough that you come here every year, to weep like a woman over a grave?” And he smiled sarcastically.

The shot hit the mark. Basilio changed color and advanced a step.

“What do you want me to do?” he asked angrily.

“Without means, without social position, how may I bring their murderers to justice? I would merely be another victim, shattered like a piece of glass hurled against a rock. Ah, you do ill to recall this to me, since it is wantonly reopening a wound!”

“But what if I should offer you my aid?”

Basilio shook his head and remained pensive. “All the tardy vindications of justice, all the revenge in the world, will not restore a single hair of my mother’s head, or recall a smile to my brother’s lips. Let them

rest in peace—what should I gain now by avenging them?”

“Prevent others from suffering what you have suffered, that in the future there be no brothers murdered or mothers driven to madness. Resignation is not always a virtue; it is a crime when it encourages tyrants: there are no despots where there are no slaves! Man is in his own nature so wicked that he always abuses complaisance. I thought as [66]you do, and you know what my fate was. Those who caused your misfortunes are watching you day and night, they suspect that you are only biding your time, they take your eagerness to learn, your love of study, your very complaisance, for burning desires for revenge. The day they can get rid of you they will do with you as they did with me, and they will not let you grow to manhood, because they fear and hate you!”

“Hate me? Still hate me after the wrong they have done me?” asked the youth in surprise.

Simoun burst into a laugh. “‘It is natural for man to hate those whom he has wronged,’ said Tacitus, confirming the *quos laeserunt et oderunt* of Seneca. When you wish to gauge the evil or the good that one

people has done to another, you have only to observe whether it hates or loves. Thus is explained the reason why many who have enriched themselves here in the high offices they have filled, on their return to the Peninsula relieve themselves by slanders and insults against those who have been their victims. *Proprium humani ingenii est odisse quern laeseris!"*

"But if the world is large, if one leaves them to the peaceful enjoyment of power, if I ask only to be allowed to work, to live—"

"And to rear meek-natured sons to send them afterwards to submit to the yoke," continued Simoun, cruelly mimicking Basilio's tone. "A fine future you prepare for them, and they have to thank you for a life of humiliation and suffering! Good enough, young man! When a body is inert, it is useless to galvanize it. Twenty years of continuous slavery, of systematic humiliation, of constant prostration, finally create in the mind a twist that cannot be straightened by the labor of a day. Good and evil instincts are inherited and transmitted from father to son. Then let your idylic ideas live, your dreams of a slave who asks only for a bandage to wrap the chain so that it may rattle less and not ulcerate his skin!

You hope for a little home and some ease, a wife and a handful of rice—here is your [67]ideal man of the Philippines! Well, if they give it to you, consider yourself fortunate."

Basilio, accustomed to obey and bear with the caprices and humors of Capitan Tiago. was now dominated by Simoun, who appeared to him terrible and sinister on a background bathed in tears and blood. He tried to explain himself by saying that he did not consider himself fit to mix in politics, that he had no political opinions because he had never studied the question, but that he was always ready to lend his services the day they might be needed, that for the moment he saw only one need, the enlightenment of the people.

Simoun stopped him with a gesture, and, as the dawn was coming, said to him: "Young man, I am not warning you to keep my secret, because I know that discretion is one of your good qualities, and even though you might wish to sell me, the jeweler Simoun, the friend of the authorities and of the religious corporations, will always be given more credit than the student Basilio, already suspected of filibusterism, and, being a native, so much the more marked and watched, and because in the profession

you are entering upon you will encounter powerful rivals. After all, even though you have not corresponded to my hopes, the day on which you change your mind, look me up at my house in the Escolta, and I'll be glad to help you."

Basilio thanked him briefly and went away.

"Have I really made a mistake?" mused Simoun, when he found himself alone. "Is it that he doubts me and meditates his plan of revenge so secretly that he fears to tell it even in the solitude of the night? Or can it be that the years of servitude have extinguished in his heart every human sentiment and there remain only the animal desires to live and reproduce? In that case the type is deformed and will have to be cast over again. Then the hecatomb is preparing: let the unfit perish and only the strongest survive!"

Then he added sadly, as if apostrophizing some one: [68]"Have patience, you who left me a name and a home, have patience! I have lost all—country, future, prosperity, your very tomb, but have patience! And thou, noble spirit, great soul, generous heart, who didst live with only one thought and didst sacrifice thy life without asking the gratitude or applause of any one, have patience, have patience! The methods

that I use may perhaps not be thine, but they are the most direct. The day is coming, and when it brightens I myself will come to announce it to you who are now indifferent. Have patience!”[69]

Merry Christmas!

When Juli opened her sorrowing eyes, she saw that the house was still dark, but the cocks were crowing. Her first thought was that perhaps the Virgin had performed the miracle and the sun was not going to rise, in spite of the invocations of the cocks. She rose, crossed herself, recited her morning prayers with great devotion, and with as little noise as possible went out on the *batalan.*

There was no miracle—the sun was rising and promised a magnificent morning, the breeze was delightfully cool, the stars were paling in the east, and the cocks were crowing as if to see who could crow best and loudest. That had been too much to ask —it were much easier to request the Virgin to send the two hundred and fifty pesos. What would it cost the Mother of the Lord to give them? But underneath the image she found only the letter of her father asking for the ransom of five hundred pesos. There was nothing to do but go, so, seeing that her grandfather was not stirring, she thought him asleep and began to prepare breakfast. Strange, she was calm, she even had a desire to laugh! What had she had last night to afflict her so? She was not going very far, she could come every second day to visit the

house, her grandfather could see her, and as for Basilio, he had known for some time the bad turn her father's affairs had taken, since he had often said to her, "When I'm a physician and we are married, your father won't need his fields."

"What a fool I was to cry so much," she said to herself as she packed her *tampipi*. Her fingers struck against the locket and she pressed it to her lips, but immediately [70]wiped them from fear of contagion, for that locket set with diamonds and emeralds had come from a leper. Ah, then, if she should catch that disease she could not get married.

As it became lighter, she could see her grandfather seated in a corner, following all her movements with his eyes, so she caught up her*tampipi* of clothes and approached him smilingly to kiss his hand. The old man blessed her silently, while she tried to appear merry. "When father comes back, tell him that I have at last gone to college—my mistress talks Spanish. It's the cheapest college I could find."

Seeing the old man's eyes fill with tears, she placed the *tampipi* on her head and hastily went downstairs, her slippers slapping merrily on the wooden steps. But when she turned her head to look again at the

house, the house wherein had faded her childhood dreams and her maiden illusions, when she saw it sad, lonely, deserted, with the windows half closed, vacant and dark like a dead man's eyes, when she heard the low rustling of the bamboos, and saw them nodding in the fresh morning breeze as though bidding her farewell, then her vivacity disappeared; she stopped, her eyes filled with tears, and letting herself fall in a sitting posture on a log by the wayside she broke out into disconsolate tears.

Juli had been gone several hours and the sun was quite high overhead when Tandang Selo gazed from the window at the people in their festival garments going to the town to attend the high mass. Nearly all led by the hand or carried in their arms a little boy or girl decked out as if for a fiesta.

Christmas day in the Philippines is, according to the elders, a fiesta for the children, who are perhaps not of the same opinion and who, it may be supposed, have for it an instinctive dread. They are roused early, washed, dressed, and decked out with everything new, dear, and precious that they possess —high silk shoes, big hats, woolen or velvet suits, without overlooking four or five[71]scapularies, which contain texts from St. John, and thus burdened they

are carried to the high mass, where for almost an hour they are subjected to the heat and the human smells from so many crowding, perspiring people, and if they are not made to recite the rosary they must remain quiet, bored, or asleep. At each movement or antic that may soil their clothing they are pinched and scolded, so the fact is that they do not laugh or feel happy, while in their round eyes can be read a protest against so much embroidery and a longing for the old shirt of week-days.

Afterwards, they are dragged from house to house to kiss their relatives' hands. There they have to dance, sing, and recite all the amusing things they know, whether in the humor or not, whether comfortable or not in their fine clothes, with the eternal pinchings and scoldings if they play any of their tricks. Their relatives give them cuartos which their parents seize upon and of which they hear nothing more. The only positive results they are accustomed to get from the fiesta are the marks of the aforesaid pinchings, the vexations, and at best an attack of indigestion from gorging themselves with candy and cake in the houses of kind relatives. But such is the custom, and Filipino children enter the world through these

ordeals, which afterwards prove the least sad, the least hard, of their lives.

Adult persons who live independently also share in this fiesta, by visiting their parents and their parents' relatives, crooking their knees, and wishing them a merry Christmas. Their Christmas gift consists of a sweetmeat, some fruit, a glass of water, or some insignificant present.

Tandang Selo saw all his friends pass and thought sadly that this year he had no Christmas gift for anybody, while his granddaughter had gone without hers, without wishing him a merry Christinas. Was it delicacy on Juli's part or pure forgetfulness?

When he tried to greet the relatives who called on him, bringing their children, he found to his great surprise that he could not articulate a word. Vainly he tried, but no [72]sound could he utter. He placed his hands on his throat, shook his head, but without effect. When he tried to laugh, his lips trembled convulsively and the only noise produced was a hoarse wheeze like the blowing of bellows.

The women gazed at him in consternation. "He's dumb, he's dumb!" they cried in astonishment, raising at once a literal pandemonium.[73]

Pilates

When the news of this misfortune became known in the town, some lamented it and others shrugged their shoulders. No one was to blame, and no one need lay it on his conscience.

The lieutenant of the Civil Guard gave no sign: he had received an order to take up all the arms and he had performed his duty. He had chased the tulisanes whenever he could, and when they captured Cabesang Tales he had organized an expedition and brought into the town, with their arms bound behind them, five or six rustics who looked suspicious, so if Cabesang Tales did not show up it was because he was not in the pockets or under the skins of the prisoners, who were thoroughly shaken out.

The friar-administrator shrugged his shoulders: he had nothing to do with it, it was a matter of tulisanes and he had merely done his duty. True it was that if he had not entered the complaint, perhaps the arms would not have been taken up, and poor Tales would not have been captured; but he, Fray Clemente, had to look after his own safety, and that Tales had a way of staring at him as if picking out a good target in some part of his body. Self-defense is natural. If there

are tulisanes, the fault is not his, it is not his duty to run them down—that belongs to the Civil Guard. If Cabesang Tales, instead of wandering about his fields, had stayed at home, he would not have been captured. In short, that was a punishment from heaven upon those who resisted the demands of his corporation.

When Sister Penchang, the pious old woman in whose [74]service Juli had entered, learned of it, she ejaculated several *'Susmarioseps*, crossed herself, and remarked, "Often God sends these trials because we are sinners or have sinning relatives, to whom we should have taught piety and we haven't done so."

Those *sinning relatives* referred to Juliana, for to this pious woman Juli was a great sinner. "Think of a girl of marriageable age who doesn't yet know how to pray! *Jesús*, how scandalous! If the wretch doesn't say the *Diós te salve María* without stopping at *es contigo*, and the *Santa María* without a pause after *pecadores*, as every good Christian who fears God ought to do! She doesn't know the *oremus gratiam*, and says *mentíbus* for *méntibus*. Anybody hearing her would think she was talking about something else. *'Susmariosep!*"

Greatly scandalized, she made the sign of the cross and thanked God, who had permitted the capture of the father in order that the daughter might be snatched from sin and learn the virtues which, according to the curates, should adorn every Christian woman. She therefore kept the girl constantly at work, not allowing her to return to the village to look after her grandfather. Juli had to learn how to pray, to read the books distributed by the friars, and to work until the two hundred and fifty pesos should be paid.

When she learned that Basilio had gone to Manila to get his savings and ransom Juli from her servitude, the good woman believed that the girl was forever lost and that the devil had presented himself in the guise of the student. Dreadful as it all was, how true was that little book the curate had given her! Youths who go to Manila to study are ruined and then ruin the others. Thinking to rescue Juli, she made her read and re-read the book called *Tandang Basio Macunat*,[1] charging her always to go and see the [75]curate in the convento,[2] as did the heroine, who is so praised by the author, a friar.

Meanwhile, the friars had gained their point. They had certainly won the suit, so they took advantage of

Cabesang Tales' captivity to turn the fields over to the one who had asked for them, without the least thought of honor or the faintest twinge of shame. When the former owner returned and learned what had happened, when he saw his fields in another's possession,—those fields that had cost the lives of his wife and daughter,—when he saw his father dumb and his daughter working as a servant, and when he himself received an order from the town council, transmitted through the headman of the village, to move out of the house within three days, he said nothing; he sat down at his father's side and spoke scarcely once during the whole day.[76]

[1] The nature of this booklet, in Tagalog, is made clear in several passages. It was issued by the Franciscans, but proved too outspoken for even Latin refinement, and was suppressed by the Order itself.—Tr.

[2] The rectory or parish house.

Wealth and Want

On the following day, to the great surprise of the village, the jeweler Simoun, followed by two servants, each carrying a canvas-covered chest, requested the hospitality of Cabesang Tales, who even in the midst of his wretchedness did not forget the good Filipino customs—rather, he was troubled to think that he had no way of properly entertaining the stranger. But Simoun brought everything with him, servants and provisions, and merely wished to spend the day and night in the house because it was the largest in the village and was situated between San Diego and Tiani, towns where he hoped to find many customers.

Simoun secured information about the condition of the roads and asked Cabesang Tales if his revolver was a sufficient protection against the tulisanes.

“They have rifles that shoot a long way,” was the rather absent-minded reply.

“This revolver does no less,” remarked Simoun, firing at an areca-palm some two hundred paces away.

Cabesang Tales noticed that some nuts fell, but remained silent and thoughtful.

Gradually the families, drawn by the fame of the jeweler's wares, began to collect. They wished one another merry Christmas, they talked of masses, saints, poor crops, but still were there to spend their savings for jewels and trinkets brought from Europe. It was known that the jeweler was the friend of the Captain-General, so it wasn't lost labor to get on good terms with him, and thus be prepared for contingencies.

Capitan Basilio came with his wife, daughter, and son-in-law, [77]prepared to spend at least three thousand pesos. Sister Penchang was there to buy a diamond ring she had promised to the Virgin of Antipolo. She had left Juli at home memorizing a booklet the curate had sold her for four cuartos, with forty days of indulgence granted by the Archbishop to every one who read it or listened to it read.

"*Jesús!*" said the pious woman to Capitana Tika, "that poor girl has grown up like a mushroom planted by the *tikbalang*. I've made her read the book at the top of her voice at least fifty times and she doesn't remember a single word of it. She has a head like a

sieve—full when it's in the water. All of us hearing her, even the dogs and cats, have won at least twenty years of indulgence."

Simoun arranged his two chests on the table, one being somewhat larger than the other. "You don't want plated jewelry or imitation gems. This lady," turning to Sinang, "wants real diamonds."

"That's it, yes, sir, diamonds, old diamonds, antique stones, you know," she responded. "Papa will pay for them, because he likes antique things, antique stones." Sinang was accustomed to joke about the great deal of Latin her father understood and the little her husband knew.

"It just happens that I have some antique jewels," replied Simoun, taking the canvas cover from the smaller chest, a polished steel case with bronze trimmings and stout locks. "I have necklaces of Cleopatra's, real and genuine, discovered in the Pyramids; rings of Roman senators and knights, found in the ruins of Carthage."

"Probably those that Hannibal sent back after the battle of Cannae!" exclaimed Capitan Basilio seriously, while he trembled with pleasure. The good man, thought he had read much about the ancients,

had never, by reason of the lack of museums in Filipinas, seen any of the objects of those times.

“I have brought besides costly earrings of Roman ladies, [78]discovered in the villa of Annius Mucius Papilinus in Pompeii.”

Capitan Easilio nodded to show that he understood and was eager to see such precious relics. The women remarked that they also wanted things from Rome, such as rosaries blessed by the Pope, holy relics that would take away sins without the need of confessions, and so on.

When the chest was opened and the cotton packing removed, there was exposed a tray filled with rings, reliquaries, lockets, crucifixes, brooches, and such like. The diamonds set in among variously colored stones flashed out brightly and shimmered among golden flowers of varied hues, with petals of enamel, all of peculiar designs and rare Arabesque workmanship.

Simoun lifted the tray and exhibited another filled with quaint jewels that would have satisfied the imaginations of seven débutantes on the eves of the balls in their honor. Designs, one more fantastic than the other, combinations of precious stones and pearls

worked into the figures of insects with azure backs and transparent forewings, sapphires, emeralds, rubies, turquoises, diamonds, joined to form dragonflies, wasps, bees, butterflies, beetles, serpents, lizards, fishes, sprays of flowers. There were diadems, necklaces of pearls and diamonds, so that some of the girls could not withhold a *nakú* of admiration, and Sinang gave a cluck with her tongue, whereupon her mother pinched her to prevent her from encouraging the jeweler to raise his prices, for Capitana Tika still pinched her daughter even after the latter was married.

“Here you have some old diamonds,” explained the jeweler. “This ring belonged to the Princess Lamballe and those earrings to one of Marie Antoinette’s ladies.” They consisted of some beautiful solitaire diamonds, as large as grains of corn, with somewhat bluish lights, and pervaded with a severe elegance, as though they still reflected in their sparkles the shuddering of the Reign of Terror.[79]

“Those two earrings!” exclaimed Sinang, looking at her father and instinctively covering the arm next to her mother.

“Something more ancient yet, something Roman,” said Capitan Basilio with a wink.

The pious Sister Penchang thought that with such a gift the Virgin of Antipolo would be softened and grant her her most vehement desire: for some time she had begged for a wonderful miracle to which her name would be attached, so that her name might be immortalized on earth and she then ascend into heaven, like the Capitana Ines of the curates. She inquired the price and Simoun asked three thousand pesos, which made the good woman cross herself —*’Susmariosep!*

Simoun now exposed the third tray, which was filled with watches, cigar- and match-cases decorated with the rarest enamels, reliquaries set with diamonds and containing the most elegant miniatures.

The fourth tray, containing loose gems, stirred a murmur of admiration. Sinang again clucked with her tongue, her mother again pinched her, although at the same time herself emitting a *’Susmaría* of wonder.

No one there had ever before seen so much wealth. In that chest lined with dark-blue velvet, arranged in trays, were the wonders of the *Arabian Nights,* the dreams of Oriental fantasies. Diamonds as large as

peas glittered there, throwing out attractive rays as if they were about to melt or burn with all the hues of the spectrum; emeralds from Peru, of varied forms and shapes; rubies from India, red as drops of blood; sapphires from Ceylon, blue and white; turquoises from Persia; Oriental pearls, some rosy, some lead-colored, others black. Those who have at night seen a great rocket burst in the azure darkness of the sky into thousands of colored lights, so bright that they make the eternal stars look dim, can imagine the aspect the tray presented.

As if to increase the admiration of the beholders, Simoun [80]took the stones out with his tapering brown fingers, gloating over their crystalline hardness, their luminous stream, as they poured from his hands like drops of water reflecting the tints of the rainbow. The reflections from so many facets, the thought of their great value, fascinated the gaze of every one.

Cabesang Tales, who had approached out of curiosity, closed his eyes and drew back hurriedly, as if to drive away an evil thought. Such great riches were an insult to his misfortunes; that man had come there to make an exhibition of his immense wealth on the very day that he, Tales, for lack of money, for lack of

protectors, had to abandon the house raised by his own hands.

“Here you have two black diamonds, among the largest in existence,” explained the jeweler. “They’re very difficult to cut because they’re the very hardest. This somewhat rosy stone is also a diamond, as is this green one that many take for an emerald. Quiroga the Chinaman offered me six thousand pesos for it in order to present it to a very influential lady, and yet it is not the green ones that are the most valuable, but these blue ones.”

He selected three stones of no great size, but thick and well-cut, of a delicate azure tint.

“For all that they are smaller than the green,” he continued, “they cost twice as much. Look at this one, the smallest of all, weighing not more than two carats, which cost me twenty thousand pesos and which I won’t sell for less than thirty. I had to make a special trip to buy it. This other one, from the mines of Golconda, weighs three and a half carats and is worth over seventy thousand. The Viceroy of India, in a letter I received the day before yesterday, offers me twelve thousand pounds sterling for it.”

Before such great wealth, all under the power of that man who talked so unaffectedly, the spectators felt a kind of awe mingled with dread. Sinang clucked several times and her mother did not pinch her, perhaps because she too was overcome, or perhaps because she reflected that a [81]jeweler like Simoun was not going to try to gain five pesos more or less as a result of an exclamation more or less indiscreet. All gazed at the gems, but no one showed any desire to handle them, they were so awe-inspiring. Curiosity was blunted by wonder. Cabesang Tales stared out into the field, thinking that with a single diamond, perhaps the very smallest there, he could recover his daughter, keep his house, and perhaps rent another farm. Could it be that those gems were worth more than a man's home, the safety of a maiden, the peace of an old man in his declining days?

As if he guessed the thought, Simoun remarked to those about him: "Look here—with one of these little blue stones, which appear so innocent and inoffensive, pure as sparks scattered over the arch of heaven, with one of these, seasonably presented, a man was able to have his enemy deported, the father of a family, as a disturber of the peace; and with this other little one like it, red as one's heart-blood, as the

feeling of revenge, and bright as an orphan's tears, he was restored to liberty, the man was returned to his home, the father to his children, the husband to the wife, and a whole family saved from a wretched future."

He slapped the chest and went on in a loud tone in bad Tagalog: "Here I have, as in a medicine-chest, life and death, poison and balm, and with this handful I can drive to tears all the inhabitants of the Philippines!"

The listeners gazed at him awe-struck, knowing him to be right. In his voice there could be detected a strange ring, while sinister flashes seemed to issue from behind the blue goggles.

Then as if to relieve the strain of the impression made by the gems on such simple folk, he lifted up the tray and exposed at the bottom the *sanctum sanctorum*. Cases of Russian leather, separated by layers of cotton, covered a bottom lined with gray velvet. All expected wonders, and Sinang's husband thought he saw carbuncles, gems that [82]flashed fire and shone in the midst of the shadows. Capitan Basilio was on the threshold of immortality: he was going to behold something real, something beyond his dreams.

“This was a necklace of Cleopatra’s,” said Simoun, taking out carefully a flat case in the shape of a half-moon. “It’s a jewel that can’t be appraised, an object for a museum, only for a rich government.”

It was a necklace fashioned of bits of gold representing little idols among green and blue beetles, with a vulture’s head made from a single piece of rare jasper at the center between two extended wings—the symbol and decoration of Egyptian queens.

Sinang turned up her nose and made a grimace of childish depreciation, while Capitan Basilio, with all his love for antiquity, could not restrain an exclamation of disappointment.

“It’s a magnificent jewel, well-preserved, almost two thousand years old.”

“Pshaw!” Sinang made haste to exclaim, to prevent her father’s falling into temptation.

“Fool!” he chided her, after overcoming his first disappointment. “How do you know but that to this necklace is due the present condition of the world? With this Cleopatra may have captivated Caesar, Mark Antony! This has heard the burning declarations of love from the greatest warriors of

their time, it has listened to speeches in the purest and most elegant Latin, and yet you would want to wear it!”

“I? I wouldn’t give three pesos for it.”

“You could give twenty, silly,” said Capitana Tika in a judicial tone. “The gold is good and melted down would serve for other jewelry.”

“This is a ring that must have belonged to Sulla,” continued Simoun, exhibiting a heavy ring of solid gold with a seal on it.

“With that he must have signed the death-wrarrants during his dictatorship!” exclaimed Capitan Basilio, pale [83]with emotion. He examined it and tried to decipher the seal, but though he turned it over and over he did not understand paleography, so he could not read it.

“What a finger Sulla had!” he observed finally. “This would fit two of ours—as I’ve said, we’re degenerating!”

“I still have many other jewels—”

“If they’re all that kind, never mind!” interrupted Sinang. “I think I prefer the modern.”

Each one selected some piece of jewelry, one a ring, another a watch, another a locket. Capitana Tika bought a reliquary that contained a fragment of the stone on which Our Saviour rested at his third fall; Sinang a pair of earrings; and Capitan Basilio the watch-chain for the alferez, the lady's earrings for the curate, and other gifts. The families from the town of Tiani, not to be outdone by those of San Diego, in like manner emptied their purses.

Simoun bought or exchanged old jewelry, brought there by economical mothers, to whom it was no longer of use.

"You, haven't you something to sell?" he asked Cabesang Tales, noticing the latter watching the sales and exchanges with covetous eyes, but the reply was that all his daughter's jewels had been sold, nothing of value remained.

"What about Maria Clara's locket?" inquired Sinang.

"True!" the man exclaimed, and his eyes blazed for a moment.

"It's a locket set with diamonds and emeralds," Sinang told the jeweler. "My old friend wore it before she became a nun."

Simoun said nothing, but anxiously watched Cabesang Tales, who, after opening several boxes, found the locket. He examined it carefully, opening and shutting it repeatedly. It was the same locket that Maria Clara had worn during the fiesta in San Diego and which she had in a moment of compassion given to a leper.

“I like the design,” said Simoun. “How much do you want for it?”[84]

Cabesang Tales scratched his head in perplexity, then his ear, then looked at the women.

“I’ve taken a fancy to this locket,” Simoun went on. “Will you take a hundred, five hundred pesos? Do you want to exchange it for something else? Take your choice here!”

Tales stared foolishly at Simoun, as if in doubt of what he heard. “Five hundred pesos?” he murmured.

“Five hundred,” repeated the jeweler in a voice shaking with emotion.

Cabesang Tales took the locket and made several turns about the room, with his heart beating violently and his hands trembling. Dared he ask more? That

locket could save him, this was an excellent opportunity, such as might not again present itself.

The women winked at him to encourage him to make the sale, excepting Penchang, who, fearing that Juli would be ransomed, observed piously: “I would keep it as a relic. Those who have seen Maria Clara in the nunnery say she has got so thin and weak that she can scarcely talk and it’s thought that she’ll die a saint. Padre Salvi speaks very highly of her and he’s her confessor. That’s why Juli didn’t want ito give it up, but rather preferred to pawn herself.”

This speech had its effect—the thought of his daughter restrained Tales. “If you will allow me,” he said, “I’ll go to the town to consult my daughter. I’ll be back before night.”

This was agreed upon and Tales set out at once. But when he found himself outside of the village, he made out at a distance, on a path, that entered the woods, the friar-administrator and a man whom he recognized as the usurper of his land. A husband seeing his wife enter a private room with another man could not feel more wrath or jealousy than Cabesang Tales experienced when he saw them moving over his fields, the fields cleared by him,

which he had thought to leave to his children. It seemed to him that [85]they were mocking him, laughing at his powerlessness. There flashed into his memory what he had said about never giving up his fields except to him who irrigated them with his own blood and buried in them his wife and daughter.

He stopped, rubbed his hand over his forehead, and shut his eyes. When he again opened them, he saw that the man had turned to laugh and that the friar had caught his sides as though to save himself from bursting with merriment, then he saw them point toward his house and laugh again.

A buzz sounded in his ears, he felt the crack of a whip around his chest, the red mist reappeared before his eyes, he again saw the corpses of his wife and daughter, and beside them the usurper with the friar laughing and holding his sides. Forgetting everything else, he turned aside into the path they had taken, the one leading to his fields.

Simoun waited in vain for Cabesang Tales to return that night. But the next morning when he arose he noticed that the leather holster of his revolver was empty. Opening it he found inside a scrap of paper wrapped around the locket set with emeralds and

diamonds, with these few lines written on it in Tagalog:

"Pardon, sir, that in my own house I relieve you of what belongs to you, but necessity drives me to it. In exchange for your revolver I leave the locket you desired so much. I need the weapon, for I am going out to join the tulisanes.

"I advise you not to keep on your present road, because if you fall into our power, not then being my guest, we will require of you a large ransom.

Telesforo Juan de Dios."

"At last I've found my man!" muttered Simoun with a deep breath. "He's somewhat scrupulous, but so much the better—he'll keep his promises."

He then ordered a servant to go by boat over the lake to Los Baños with the larger chest and await him there. He would go on overland, taking the smaller chest, the one [86]containing his famous jewels. The arrival of four civil-guards completed his good humor. They came to arrest Cabesang Tales and not finding him took Tandang Selo away instead.

Three murders had been committed during the night. The friar-administrator and the new tenant of Cabesang Tales' land had been found dead, with their heads split open and their mouths full of earth, on the border of the fields. In the town the wife of the usurper was found dead at dawn, her mouth also filled with earth and her throat cut, with a fragment

of paper beside her, on which was the name *Tales*, written in blood as though traced by a finger.

Calm yourselves, peaceful inhabitants of Kalamba! None of you are named Tales, none of you have committed any crime! You are called Luis Habaña, Matías Belarmino, Nicasio Eigasani, Cayetano de Jesús, Mateo Elejorde, Leandro Lopez, Antonino Lopez, Silvestre Ubaldo, Manuel Hidalgo, Paciano Mercado, your name is the whole village of Kalamba.[1] You cleared your fields, on them you have spent the labor of your whole lives, your savings, your vigils and privations, and you have been despoiled of them, driven from your homes, with the rest forbidden to show you hospitality! Not content with outraging justice, they[2] have trampled upon the sacred traditions of your country! You have served Spain and the King, and when in their name you have asked for justice, you were banished without trial, torn from your wives' arms and your children's caresses! Any one of you has suffered more than Cabesang Tales, and yet none, not one of you, has received justice! Neither pity nor humanity has been shown you—you have been persecuted beyond [87]the tomb, as was Mariano Herbosa![3] Weep or laugh, there in those lonely isles where you wander vaguely,

uncertain of the future! Spain, the generous Spain, is watching over you, and sooner or later you will have justice![88]

[1] Friends of the author, who suffered in Weyler's expedition, mentioned below.—Tr.

[2] The Dominican corporation, at whose instigation Captain-General Valeriano Weyler sent a battery of artillery to Kalamba to destroy the property of tenants who were contesting in the courts the friars' titles to land there. The author's family were the largest sufferers.—Tr.

[3] A relative of the author, whose body was dragged from the tomb and thrown to the dogs, on the pretext that he had died without receiving final absolution.—Tr.

Los Baños

His Excellency, the Captain-General and Governor of the Philippine Islands, had been hunting in Bosoboso. But as he had to be accompanied by a band of music, —since such an exalted personage was not to be esteemed less than the wooden images carried in the processions,—and as devotion to the divine art of St. Cecilia has not yet been popularized among the deer and wild boars of Bosoboso, his Excellency, with the band of music and train of friars, soldiers, and clerks, had not been able to catch a single rat or a solitary bird.

The provincial authorities foresaw dismissals and transfers, the poor gobernadorcillos and cabezas de barangay were restless and sleepless, fearing that the mighty hunter in his wrath might have a notion to make up with their persons for the lack of submissiveness on the part of the beasts of the forest, as had been done years before by an alcalde who had traveled on the shoulders of impressed porters because he found no horses gentle enough to guarantee his safety. There was not lacking an evil rumor that his Excellency had decided to take some action, since in this he saw the first symptoms of a rebellion which should be strangled in its infancy,

that a fruitless hunt hurt the prestige of the Spanish name, that he already had his eye on a wretch to be dressed up as a deer, when his Excellency, with clemency that Ben-Zayb lacked words to extol sufficiently, dispelled all the fears by declaring that it pained him to sacrifice to his pleasure the beasts of the forest.

But to tell the truth, his Excellency was secretly very well satisfied, for what would have happened had he missed [89]a shot at a deer, one of those not familiar with political etiquette? What would the prestige of the sovereign power have come to then? A Captain-General of the Philippines missing a shot, like a raw hunter? What would have been said by the Indians, among whom there were some fair huntsmen? The integrity of the fatherland would have been endangered.

So it was that his Excellency, with a sheepish smile, and posing as a disappointed hunter, ordered an immediate return to Los Baños. During the journey he related with an indifferent air his hunting exploits in this or that forest of the Peninsula, adopting a tone somewhat depreciative, as suited the case, toward hunting in Filipinas. The bath in Dampalit, the hot springs on the shore of the lake, card-games in the

palace, with an occasional excursion to some neighboring waterfall, or the lake infested with caymans, offered more attractions and fewer risks to the integrity of the fatherland.

Thus on one of the last days of December, his Excellency found himself in the sala, taking a hand at cards while he awaited the breakfast hour. He had come from the bath, with the usual glass of coconut-milk and its soft meat, so he was in the best of humors for granting favors and privileges. His good humor was increased by his winning a good many hands, for Padre Irene and Padre Sibyla, with whom he was playing, were exercising all their skill in secretly trying to lose, to the great irritation of Padre Camorra, who on account of his late arrival only that morning was not informed as to the game they were playing on the General. The friar-artilleryman was playing in good faith and with great care, so he turned red and bit his lip every time Padre Sibyla seemed inattentive or blundered, but he dared not say a word by reason of the respect he felt for the Dominican. In exchange he took his revenge out on Padre Irene, whom he looked upon as a base fawner and despised for his coarseness. Padre Sibyla let him scold, while the humbler Padre Irene tried to excuse

himself [90]by rubbing his long nose. His Excellency was enjoying it and took advantage, like the good tactician that the Canon hinted he was, of all the mistakes of his opponents. Padre Camorra was ignorant of the fact that across the table they were playing for the intellectual development of the Filipinos, the instruction in Castilian, but had he known it he would doubtless have joyfully entered into that *game*.

The open balcony admitted the fresh, pure breeze and revealed the lake, whose waters murmured sweetly around the base of the edifice, as if rendering homage. On the right, at a distance, appeared Talim Island, a deep blue in the midst of the lake, while almost in front lay the green and deserted islet of Kalamba, in the shape of a half-moon. To the left the picturesque shores were fringed with clumps of bamboo, then a hill overlooking the lake, with wide ricefields beyond, then red roofs amid the deep green of the trees,—the town of Kalamba,—and beyond the shore-line fading into the distance, with the horizon at the back closing down over the water, giving the lake the appearance of a sea and justifying the name the Indians give it of *dagat na tabang*, or fresh-water sea.

At the end of the sala, seated before a table covered with documents, was the secretary. His Excellency was a great worker and did not like to lose time, so he attended to business in the intervals of the game or while dealing the cards. Meanwhile, the bored secretary yawned and despaired. That morning he had worked, as usual, over transfers, suspensions of employees, deportations, pardons, and the like, but had not yet touched the great question that had stirred so much interest—the petition of the students requesting permission to establish an academy of Castilian. Pacing from one end of the room to the other and conversing animatedly but in low tones were to be seen Don Custodio, a high official, and a friar named Padre Fernandez, who hung his head with an air either of meditation or annoyance. From an adjoining room issued the [91]click of balls striking together and bursts of laughter, amid which might be heard the sharp, dry voice of Simoun, who was playing billiards with Ben-Zayb.

Suddenly Padre Camorra arose. “The devil with this game, *puñales!*” he exclaimed, throwing his cards at Padre Irene’s head. “*Puñales*, that trick, if not all the others, was assured and we lost by default! *Puñales!* The devil with this game!”

He explained the situation angrily to all the occupants of the sala, addressing himself especially to the three walking about, as if he had selected them for judges. The general played thus, he replied with such a card, Padre Irene had a certain card; he led, and then that fool of a Padre Irene didn't play his card! Padre Irene was giving the game away! It was a devil of a way to play! His mother's son had not come here to rack his brains for nothing and lose his money!

Then he added, turning very red, "If the booby thinks my money grows on every bush!... On top of the fact that my Indians are beginning to haggle over payments!" Fuming, and disregarding the excuses of Padre Irene, who tried to explain while he rubbed the tip of his beak in order to conceal his sly smile, he went into the billiardroom.

"Padre Fernandez, would you like to take a hand?" asked Fray Sibyla.

"I'm a very poor player," replied the friar with a grimace.

"Then get Simoun," said the General. "Eh, Simoun! Eh, Mister, won't you try a hand?"

"What is your disposition concerning the arms for sporting purposes?" asked the secretary, taking

advantage of the pause.

Simoun thrust his head through the doorway.

“Don’t you want to take Padre Camorra’s place, Señor Sindbad?” inquired Padre Irene. “You can bet diamonds instead of chips.”[92]

“I don’t care if I do,” replied Simoun, advancing while he brushed the chalk from his hands. “What will you bet?”

“What should we bet?” returned Padre Sibyla. “The General can bet what he likes, but we priests, clerics —”

“Bah!” interrupted Simoun ironically. “You and Padre Irene can pay with deeds of charity, prayers, and virtues, eh?”

“You know that the virtues a person may possess,” gravely argued Padre Sibyla, “are not like the diamonds that may pass from hand to hand, to be sold and resold. They are inherent in the being, they are essential attributes of the subject—”

“I’ll be satisfied then if you pay me with promises,” replied Simoun jestingly. “You, Padre Sibyla, instead of paying me five something or other in money, will say, for example: for five days I renounce poverty,

humility, and obedience. You, Padre Irene: I renounce chastity, liberality, and so on. Those are small matters, and I'm putting up my diamonds."

"What a peculiar man this Simoun is, what notions he has!" exclaimed Padre Irene with a smile.

"And *he*," continued Simoun, slapping his Excellency familiarly on the shoulder, "he will pay me with an order for five days in prison, or five months, or an order of deportation made out in blank, or let us say a summary execution by the Civil Guard while my man is being conducted from one town to another."

This was a strange proposition, so the three who had been pacing about gathered around.

"But, Señor Simoun," asked the high official, "what good will you get out of winning promises of virtues, or lives and deportations and summary executions?"

"A great deal! I'm tired of hearing virtues talked about and would like to have the whole of them, all there are in the world, tied up in a sack, in order to throw them into the sea, even though I had to use my diamonds for sinkers."[93]

“What an idea!” exclaimed Padre Irene with another smile. “And the deportations and executions, what of them?”

“Well, to clean the country and destroy every evil seed.”

“Get out! You’re still sore at the tulisanes. But you were lucky that they didn’t demand a larger ransom or keep all your jewels. Man, don’t be ungrateful!”

Simoun proceeded to relate how he had been intercepted by a band of tulisanes, who, after entertaining him for a day, had let him go on his way without exacting other ransom than his two fine revolvers and the two boxes of cartridges he carried with him. He added that the tulisanes had charged him with many kind regards for his Excellency, the Captain-General.

As a result of this, and as Simoun reported that the tulisanes were well provided with shotguns, rifles, and revolvers, and against such persons one man alone, no matter how well armed, could not defend himself, his Excellency, to prevent the tulisanes from getting weapons in the future, was about to dictate a new decree forbidding the introduction of sporting arms.

“On the contrary, on the contrary!” protested Simoun, “for me the tulisanes are the most respectable men in the country, they’re the only ones who earn their living honestly. Suppose I had fallen into the hands—well, of you yourselves, for example, would you have let me escape without taking half of my jewels, at least?”

Don Custodio was on the point of protesting; that Simoun was really a rude American mulatto taking advantage of his friendship with the Captain-General to insult Padre Irene, although it may be true also that Padre Irene would hardly have set him free for so little.

“The evil is not,” went on Simoun, “in that there are tulisanes in the mountains and uninhabited parts—the evil lies in the tulisanes in the towns and cities.”

“Like yourself,” put in the Canon with a smile.[94]

“Yes, like myself, like all of us! Let’s be frank, for no Indian is listening to us here,” continued the jeweler. “The evil is that we’re not all openly declared tulisanes. When that happens and we all take to the woods, on that day the country will be saved, on that day will rise a new social order which will take care of itself, and his Excellency will be able to play his

game in peace, without the necessity of having his attention diverted by his secretary."

The person mentioned at that moment yawned, extending his folded arms above his head and stretching his crossed legs under the table as far as possible, upon noticing which all laughed. His Excellency wished to change the course of the conversation, so, throwing down the cards he had been shuffling, he said half seriously: "Come, come, enough of jokes and cards! Let's get to work, to work in earnest, since we still have a half-hour before breakfast. Are there many matters to be got through with?"

All now gave their attention. That was the day for joining battle over the question of instruction in Castilian, for which purpose Padre Sibyla and Padre Irene had been there several days. It was known that the former, as Vice-Rector, was opposed to the project and that the latter supported it, and his activity was in turn supported by the Countess.

"What is there, what is there?" asked his Excellency impatiently.

"The petition about sporting arms," replied the secretary with a stifled yawn.

“Forbidden!”

“Pardon, General,” said the high official gravely, “your Excellency will permit me to invite your attention to the fact that the use of sporting arms is permitted in all the countries of the world.”

The General shrugged his shoulders and remarked dryly, “We are not imitating any nation in the world.”

Between his Excellency and the high official there was always a difference of opinion, so it was sufficient that [95]the latter offer any suggestion whatsoever to have the former remain stubborn.

The high official tried another tack. “Sporting arms can harm only rats and chickens. They’ll say—”

“But are we chickens?” interrupted the General, again shrugging his shoulders. “Am I? I’ve demonstrated that I’m not.”

“But there’s another thing,” observed the secretary. “Four months ago, when the possession of arms was prohibited, the foreign importers were assured that sporting arms would be admitted.”

His Excellency knitted his brows.

“That can be arranged,” suggested Simoun.

“How?”

“Very simply. Sporting arms nearly all have a caliber of six millimeters, at least those now in the market. Authorize only the sale of those that haven’t these six millimeters.”

All approved this idea of Simoun’s, except the high official, who muttered into Padre Fernandez’s ear that this was not dignified, nor was it the way to govern.

“The schoolmaster of Tiani,” proceeded the secretary, shuffling some papers about, “asks for a better location for—”

“What better location can he want than the storehouse that he has all to himself?” interrupted Padre Camorra, who had returned, having forgotten about the card-game.

“He says that it’s roofless,” replied the secretary, “and that having purchased out of his own pocket some maps and pictures, he doesn’t want to expose them to the weather.”

“But I haven’t anything to do with that,” muttered his Excellency. “He should address the head secretary,[1] the governor of the province, or the nuncio.”[96]

“I want to tell you,” declared Padre Camorra, “that this little schoolmaster is a discontented filibuster. Just imagine—the heretic teaches that corpses rot just the same, whether buried with great pomp or without any! Some day I’m going to punch him!” Here he doubled up his fists.

“To tell the truth,” observed Padre Sibyla, as if speaking only to Padre Irene, “he who wishes to teach, teaches everywhere, in the open air. Socrates taught in the public streets, Plato in the gardens of the Academy, even Christ among the mountains and lakes.”

“I’ve heard several complaints against this schoolmaster,” said his Excellency, exchanging a glance with Simoun. “I think the best thing would be to suspend him.”

“Suspended!” repeated the secretary.

The luck of that unfortunate, who had asked for help and received his dismissal, pained the high official and he tried to do something for him.

“It’s certain,” he insinuated rather timidly, “that education is not at all well provided for—”

“I’ve already decreed large sums for the purchase of supplies,” exclaimed his Excellency haughtily, as if to say, “I’ve done more than I ought to have done.”

“But since suitable locations are lacking, the supplies purchased get ruined.”

“Everything can’t be done at once,” said his Excellency dryly. “The schoolmasters here are doing wrong in asking for buildings when those in Spain starve to death. It’s great presumption to be better off here than in the mother country itself!”

“Filibusterism—”

“Before everything the fatherland! Before everything else we are Spaniards!” added Ben-Zayb, his eyes glowing with patriotism, but he blushed somewhat when he noticed that he was speaking alone.

“In the future,” decided the General, “all who complain will be suspended.”[97]

“If my project were accepted—” Don Custodio ventured to remark, as if talking to himself.

“For the construction of schoolhouses?”

“It’s simple, practical, economical, and, like all my projects, derived from long experience and

knowledge of the country. The towns would have schools without costing the government a cuarto."

"That's easy," observed the secretary sarcastically. "Compel the towns to construct them at their own expense," whereupon all laughed.

"No, sir! No, sir!" cried the exasperated Don Custodio, turning very red. "The buildings are already constructed and only wait to be utilized. Hygienic, unsurpassable, spacious—"

The friars looked at one another uneasily. Would Don Custodio propose that the churches and conventos be converted into schoolhouses?

"Let's hear it," said the General with a frown.

"Well, General, it's very simple," replied Don Custodio, drawing himself up and assuming his hollow voice of ceremony. "The schools are open only on week-days and the cockpits on holidays. Then convert these into schoolhouses, at least during the week."

"Man, man, man!"

"What a lovely idea!"

"What's the matter with you, Don Custodio?"

“That’s a grand suggestion!”

“That beats them all!”

“But, gentlemen,” cried Don Custodio, in answer to so many exclamations, “let’s be practical—what places are more suitable than the cockpits? They’re large, well constructed, and under a curse for the use to which they are put during the week-days. From a moral standpoint my project would be acceptable, by serving as a kind of expiation and weekly purification of the temple of chance, as we might say.”

“But the fact remains that sometimes there are cockfights [98]during the week,” objected Padre Camorra, “and it wouldn’t be right when the contractors of the cockpits pay the government—”[2]

“Well, on those days close the school!”

“Man, man!” exclaimed the scandalized Captain-General. “Such an outrage shall never be perpetrated while I govern! To close the schools in order to gamble! Man, man, I’ll resign first!” His Excellency was really horrified.

“But, General, it’s better to close them for a few days than for months.”

“It would be immoral,” observed Padre Irene, more indignant even than his Excellency.

“It’s more immoral that vice has good buildings and learning none. Let’s be practical, gentlemen, and not be carried away by sentiment. In politics there’s nothing worse than sentiment. While from humane considerations we forbid the cultivation of opium in our colonies, we tolerate the smoking of it, and the result is that we do not combat the vice but impoverish ourselves.”

“But remember that it yields to the government, without any effort, more than four hundred and fifty thousand pesos,” objected Padre Irene, who was getting more and more on the governmental side.

“Enough, enough, enough!” exclaimed his Excellency, to end the discussion. “I have my own plans in this regard and will devote special attention to the matter of public instruction. Is there anything else?”

The secretary looked uneasily toward Padre Sibyla and Padre Irene. The cat was about to come out of the bag. Both prepared themselves.

“The petition of the students requesting authorization to open an academy of Castilian,” answered the

secretary.

A general movement was noted among those in the room. After glancing at one another they fixed their eyes on the [99]General to learn what his disposition would be. For six months the petition had lain there awaiting a decision and had become converted into a kind of*casus belli* in certain circles. His Excellency had lowered his eyes, as if to keep his thoughts from being read.

The silence became embarrassing, as the General understood, so he asked the high official, “What do you think?”

“What should I think, General?” responded the person addressed, with a shrug of his shoulders and a bitter smile. “What should I think but that the petition is just, very just, and that I am surprised that six months should have been taken to consider it.”

“The fact is that it involves other considerations,” said Padre Sibyla coldly, as he half closed his eyes.

The high official again shrugged his shoulders, like one who did not comprehend what those considerations could be.

“Besides the intemperateness of the demand,” went on the Dominican, “besides the fact that it is in the nature of an infringement on our prerogatives—”

Padre Sibyla dared not go on, but looked at Simoun.

“The petition has a somewhat suspicious character,” corroborated that individual, exchanging a look with the Dominican, who winked several times.

Padre Irene noticed these things and realized that his cause was almost lost—Simoun was against him.

“It’s a peaceful rebellion, a revolution on stamped paper,” added Padre Sibyla.

“Revolution? Rebellion?” inquired the high official, staring from one to the other as if he did not understand what they could mean.

“It’s headed by some young men charged with being too radical and too much interested in reforms, not to use stronger terms,” remarked the secretary, with a look at the Dominican. “Among them is a certain Isagani, a poorly balanced head, nephew of a native priest—”

“He’s a pupil of mine,” put in Padre Fernandez, “and I’m much pleased with him.”[100]

“*Puñales,* I like your taste!” exclaimed Padre Camorra. “On the steamer we nearly had a fight. He’s so insolent that when I gave him a shove aside he returned it.”

“There’s also one Makaragui or Makarai—”

“Makaraig,” Padre Irene joined in. “A very pleasant and agreeable young man.”

Then he murmured into the General’s ear, “He’s the one I’ve talked to you about, he’s very rich. The Countess recommends him strongly.”

“Ah!”

“A medical student, one Basilio—”

“Of that Basilio, I’ll say nothing,” observed Padre Irene, raising his hands and opening them, as if to say *Dominus vobiscum*. “He’s too deep for me. I’ve never succeeded in fathoming what he wants or what he is thinking about. It’s a pity that Padre Salvi isn’t present to tell us something about his antecedents. I believe that I’ve heard that when a boy he got into trouble with the Civil Guard. His father was killed in —I don’t remember what disturbance.”

Simoun smiled faintly, silently, showing his sharp white teeth.

“Aha! Aha!” said his Excellency nodding. “That’s the kind we have! Make a note of that name.”

“But, General,” objected the high official, seeing that the matter was taking a bad turn, “up to now nothing positive is known against these young men. Their position is a very just one, and we have no right to deny it on the ground of mere conjectures. My opinion is that the government, by exhibiting confidence in the people and in its own stability, should grant what is asked, then it could freely revoke the permission when it saw that its kindness was being abused—reasons and pretexts would not be wanting, we can watch them. Why cause disaffection among some young men, who later on may feel resentment, when what they ask is commanded by royal decrees?”[101]

Padre Irene, Don Custodio, and Padre Fernandez nodded in agreement.

“But the Indians must not understand Castilian, you know,” cried Padre Camorra. “They mustn’t learn it, for then they’ll enter into arguments with us, and the Indians must not argue, but obey and pay. They mustn’t try to interpret the meaning of the laws and the books, they’re so tricky and pettifogish! Just as

soon as they learn Castilian they become enemies of God and of Spain. Just read the*Tandang Basio Macunat*—that's a book! It tells truths like this!" And he held up his clenched fists.

Padre Sibyla rubbed his hand over his tonsure in sign of impatience. "One word," he began in the most conciliatory tone, though fuming with irritation, "here we're not dealing with the instruction in Castilian alone. Here there is an underhand fight between the students and the University of Santo Tomas. If the students win this, our prestige will be trampled in the dirt, they will say that they've beaten us and will exult accordingly. Then, good-by to moral strength, good-by to everything! The first dike broken down, who will restrain this youth? With our fall we do no more than signal your own. After us, the government!"

"*Puñales*, that's not so!" exclaimed Padre Camorra. "We'll see first who has the biggest fists!"

At this point Padre Fernandez, who thus far in the discussion had merely contented himself with smiling, began to talk. All gave him their attention, for they knew him to be a thoughtful man.

“Don’t take it ill of me, Padre Sibyla, if I differ from your view of the affair, but it’s my peculiar fate to be almost always in opposition to my brethren. I say, then, that we ought not to be so pessimistic. The instruction in Castilian can be allowed without any risk whatever, and in order that it may not appear to be a defeat of the University, we Dominicans ought to put forth our efforts and [102]be the first to rejoice over it—that should be our policy. To what end are we to be engaged in an everlasting struggle with the people, when after all we are the few and they are the many, when we need them and they do not need us? Wait, Padre Camorra, wait! Admit that now the people may be weak and ignorant—I also believe that—but it will not be true tomorrow or the day after. Tomorrow and the next day they will be the stronger, they will know what is good for them, and we cannot keep it from them, just as it is not possible to keep from children the knowledge of many things when they reach a certain age. I say, then, why should we not take advantage of this condition of ignorance to change our policy completely, to place it upon a basis solid and enduring—on the basis of justice, for example, instead of on the basis of ignorance? There’s nothing like being just; that I’ve always said to my brethren, but they won’t believe me. The

Indian idolizes justice, like every race in its youth; he asks for punishment when he has done wrong, just as he is exasperated when he has not deserved it. Is theirs a just desire? Then grant it! Let's give them all the schools they want, until they are tired of them. Youth is lazy, and what urges them to activity is our opposition. Our bond of prestige, Padre Sibyla, is about worn out, so let's prepare another, the bond of gratitude, for example. Let's not be fools, let's do as the crafty Jesuits—"

"Padre Fernandez!" Anything could be tolerated by Padre Sibyla except to propose the Jesuits to him as a model. Pale and trembling, he broke out into bitter recrimination. "A Franciscan first! Anything before a Jesuit!" He was beside himself.

"Oh, oh!"

"Eh, Padre—"

A general discussion broke out, regardless of the Captain-General. All talked at once, they yelled, they misunderstood and contradicted one another. Ben-Zayb and Padre Camorra shook their fists in each other's faces, one talking [103]of simpletons and the other of ink-slingers, Padre Sibyla kept harping on the *Capitulum*, and Padre Fernandez on

the *Summa* of St. Thomas, until the curate of Los Baños entered to announce that breakfast was served.

His Excellency arose and so ended the discussion. “Well, gentlemen,” he said, “we’ve worked like niggers and yet we’re on a vacation. Some one has said that grave matters should he considered at dessert. I’m entirely of that opinion.”

“We might get indigestion,” remarked the secretary, alluding to the heat of the discussion.

“Then we’ll lay it aside until tomorrow.”

As they rose the high official whispered to the General, “Your Excellency, the daughter of Cabesang Tales has been here again begging for the release of her sick grandfather, who was arrested in place of her father.”

His Excellency looked at him with an expression of impatience and rubbed his hand across his broad forehead. “*Carambas*! Can’t one be left to eat his breakfast in peace?”

“This is the third day she has come. She’s a poor girl __”

“Oh, the devil!” exclaimed Padre Camorra. “I’ve just thought of it. I have something to say to the General

about that—that's what I came over for—to support that girl's petition."

The General scratched the back of his ear and said, "Oh, go along! Have the secretary make out an order to the lieutenant of the Civil Guard for the old man's release. They sha'n't say that we're not clement and merciful."

He looked at Ben-Zayb. The journalist winked.[104]

[1] Under the Spanish régime the government paid no attention to education, the schools (!) being under the control of the religious orders and the friar-curates of the towns.—Tr.

[2] The cockpits are farmed out annually by the local governments, the terms "contract," and "contractor," having now been softened into "license" and "licensee."—Tr.

Placido Penitente

Reluctantly, and almost with tearful eyes, Placido Penitente was going along the Escolta on his way to the University of Santo Tomas. It had hardly been a week since he had come from his town, yet he had already written to his mother twice, reiterating his desire to abandon his studies and go back there to work. His mother answered that he should have patience, that at the least he must be graduated as a bachelor of arts, since it would be unwise to desert his books after four years of expense and sacrifices on both their parts.

Whence came to Penitente this aversion to study, when he had been one of the most diligent in the famous college conducted by Padre Valerio in Tanawan? There Penitente had been considered one of the best Latinists and the subtlest disputants, one who could tangle or untangle the simplest as well as the most abstruse questions. His townspeople considered him very clever, and his curate, influenced by that opinion, already classified him as a filibuster—a sure proof that he was neither foolish nor incapable. His friends could not explain those desires for abandoning his studies and returning: he had no sweethearts, was not a gambler, hardly knew

anything about *hunkían* and rarely tried his luck at the more familiar *revesino*. He did not believe in the advice of the curates, laughed at *Tandang Basio Macunat*, had plenty of money and good clothes, yet he went to school reluctantly and looked with repugnance on his books.

On the Bridge of Spain, a bridge whose name alone came from Spain, since even its ironwork came from foreign [105]countries, he fell in with the long procession of young men on their way to the Walled City to their respective schools. Some were dressed in the European fashion and walked rapidly, carrying books and notes, absorbed in thoughts of their lessons and essays—these were the students of the Ateneo. Those from San Juan de Letran were nearly all dressed in the Filipino costume, but were more numerous and carried fewer books. Those from the University are dressed more carefully and elegantly and saunter along carrying canes instead of books. The collegians of the Philippines are not very noisy or turbulent. They move along in a preoccupied manner, such that upon seeing them one would say that before their eyes shone no hope, no smiling future. Even though here and there the line is brightened by the attractive appearance of the

schoolgirls of the *Escuela Municipal*,[1] with their sashes across their shoulders and their books in their hands, followed by their servants, yet scarcely a laugh resounds or a joke can be heard—nothing of song or jest, at best a few heavy jokes or scuffles among the smaller boys. The older ones nearly always proceed seriously and composedly, like the German students.

Placido was proceeding along the Paseo de Magallanes toward the breach—formerly the gate—of Santo Domingo, when he suddenly felt a slap on the shoulder, which made him turn quickly in ill humor.

“Hello, Penitente! Hello, Penitente!”

It was his schoolmate Juanito Pelaez, the *barbero* or pet of the professors, as big a rascal as he could be, with a roguish look and a clownish smile. The son of a Spanish mestizo—a rich merchant in one of the suburbs, who based all his hopes and joys on the boy’s talent—he promised well with his roguery, and, thanks to his custom of playing tricks on every one and then hiding behind his companions, [106]he had acquired a peculiar hump, which grew larger whenever he was laughing over his deviltry.

“What kind of time did you have, Penitente?” was his question as he again slapped him on the shoulder.

“So, so,” answered Placido, rather bored. “And you?”

“Well, it was great! Just imagine—the curate of Tiani invited me to spend the vacation in his town, and I went. Old man, you know Padre Camorra, I suppose? Well, he’s a liberal curate, very jolly, frank, very frank, one of those like Padre Paco. As there were pretty girls, we serenaded them all, he with his guitar and songs and I with my violin. I tell you, old man, we had a great time—there wasn’t a house we didn’t try!”

He whispered a few words in Placido’s ear and then broke out into laughter. As the latter exhibited some surprise, he resumed: “I’ll swear to it! They can’t help themselves, because with a governmental order you get rid of the father, husband, or brother, and then—merry Christmas! However, we did run up against a little fool, the sweetheart, I believe, of Basilio, you know? Look, what a fool this Basilio is! To have a sweetheart who doesn’t know a word of Spanish, who hasn’t any money, and who has been a servant! She’s as shy as she can be, but pretty. Padre Camorra one night started to club two fellows who

were serenading her and I don’t know how it was he didn’t kill them, yet with all that she was just as shy as ever. But it’ll result for her as it does with all the women, all of them!”

Juanito Pelaez laughed with a full mouth, as though he thought this a glorious thing, while Placido stared at him in disgust.

“Listen, what did the professor explain yesterday?” asked Juanito, changing the conversation.

“Yesterday there was no class.”

“Oho, and the day before yesterday?”

“Man, it was Thursday!”

“Right! What an ass I am! Don’t you know, Placido, [107]that I’m getting to be a regular ass? What about Wednesday?”

“Wednesday? Wait—Wednesday, it was a little wet.”

“Fine! What about Tuesday, old man?”

“Tuesday was the professor’s nameday and we went to entertain him with an orchestra, present him flowers and some gifts.”

“Ah, *carambas!*” exclaimed Juanito, “that I should have forgotten about it! What an ass I am! Listen, did

he ask for me?"

Penitente shrugged his shoulders. "I don't know, but they gave him a list of his entertainers."

"*Carambas!* Listen—Monday, what happened?"

"As it was the first school-day, he called the roll and assigned the lesson—about mirrors. Look, from here to here, by memory, word for word. We jump all this section, we take that." He was pointing out with his finger in the "Physics" the portions that were to be learned, when suddenly the book flew through the air, as a result of the slap Juanito gave it from below.

"Thunder, let the lessons go! Let's have a *dia pichido!*"

The students in Manila call *dia pichido* a school-day that falls between two holidays and is consequently suppressed, as though forced out by their wish.

"Do you know that you really are an ass?" exclaimed Placido, picking up his book and papers.

"Let's have a *dia pichido!*" repeated Juanito.

Placido was unwilling, since for only two the authorities were hardly going to suspend a class of more than a hundred and fifty. He recalled the

struggles and privations his mother was suffering in order to keep him in Manila, while she went without even the necessities of life.

They were just passing through the breach of Santo Domingo, and Juanito, gazing across the little plaza[2] in [108]front of the old Customs building, exclaimed, “Now I think of it, I’m appointed to take up the collection.”

“What collection?”

“For the monument.”

“What monument?”

“Get out! For Padre Balthazar, you know.”

“And who was Padre Balthazar?”

“Fool! A Dominican, of course—that’s why the padres call on the students. Come on now, loosen up with three or four pesos, so that they may see we are sports. Don’t let them say afterwards that in order to erect a statue they had to dig down into their own pockets. Do, Placido, it’s not money thrown away.”

He accompanied these words with a significant wink. Placido recalled the case of a student who had passed

through the entire course by presenting canary-birds, so he subscribed three pesos.

“Look now, I’ll write your name plainly so that the professor will read it, you see—Placido Penitente, three pesos. Ah, listen! In a couple of weeks comes the nameday of the professor of natural history. You know that he’s a good fellow, never marks absences or asks about the lesson. Man, we must show our appreciation!”

“That’s right!”

“Then don’t you think that we ought to give him a celebration? The orchestra must not be smaller than the one you had for the professor of physics.”

“That’s right!”

“What do you think about making the contribution two pesos? Come, Placido, you start it, so you’ll be at the head of the list.”

Then, seeing that Placido gave the two pesos without hesitation, he added, “Listen, put up four, and afterwards I’ll return you two. They’ll serve as a decoy.”

“Well, if you’re going to return them to me, why give them to you? It’ll be sufficient, for you to write four.”

“Ah, that’s right! What an ass I am! Do you know, [109]I’m getting to be a regular ass! But let me have them anyhow, so that I can show them.”

Placido, in order not to give the lie to the priest who christened him, gave what was asked, just as they reached the University.

In the entrance and along the walks on each side of it were gathered the students, awaiting the appearance of the professors. Students of the preparatory year of law, of the fifth of the secondary course, of the preparatory in medicine, formed lively groups. The latter were easily distinguished by their clothing and by a certain air that was lacking in the others, since the greater part of them came from the Ateneo Municipal. Among them could be seen the poet Isagani, explaining to a companion the theory of the refraction of light. In another group they were talking, disputing, citing the statements of the professor, the text-books, and scholastic principles; in yet another they were gesticulating and waving their books in the air or making demonstrations with their canes by drawing diagrams on the ground; farther on, they were entertaining themselves in watching the pious women go into the neighboring church, all the students making facetious remarks. An old woman

leaning on a young girl limped piously, while the girl moved along writh downcast eyes, timid and abashed to pass before so many curious eyes. The old lady, catching up her coffee-colored skirt, of the Sisterhood of St. Rita, to reveal her big feet and white stockings, scolded her companion and shot furious glances at the staring bystanders.

“The rascals!” she grunted. “Don’t look at them, keep your eyes down.”

Everything was noticed; everything called forth jokes and comments. Now it was a magnificent victoria which stopped at the door to set down a family of votaries on their way to visit the Virgin of the Rosary[3] on her favorite [110]day, while the inquisitive sharpened their eyes to get a glimpse of the shape and size of the young ladies’ feet as they got out of the carriages; now it was a student who came out of the door with devotion still shining in his eyes, for he had passed through the church to beg the Virgin’s help in understanding his lesson and to see if his sweetheart was there, to exchange a few glances with her and go on to his class with the recollection of her loving eyes.

Soon there was noticed some movement in the groups, a certain air of expectancy, while Isagani paused and turned pale. A carriage drawn by a pair of well-known white horses had stopped at the door. It was that of Paulita Gomez, and she had already jumped down, light as a bird, without giving the rascals time to see her foot. With a bewitching whirl of her body and a sweep of her hand she arranged the folds of her skirt, shot a rapid and apparently careless glance toward Isagani, spoke to him and smiled. Doña Victorina descended in her turn, gazed over her spectacles, saw Juanito Pelaez, smiled, and bowed to him affably.

Isagani, flushed with excitement, returned a timid salute, while Juanito bowed profoundly, took off his hat, and made the same gesture as the celebrated clown and caricaturist Panza when he received applause.

“Heavens, what a girl!” exclaimed one of the students, starting forward. “Tell the professor that I’m seriously ill.” So Tadeo, as this invalid youth was known, entered the church to follow the girl.

Tadeo went to the University every day to ask if the classes would be held and each time seemed to be

more and more astonished that they would. He had a fixed idea of a latent and eternal *holiday*, and expected it to come any day. So each morning, after vainly proposing that they play truant, he would go away alleging important business, an appointment, or illness, just at the very moment when his companions were going to their classes. But by some occult, thaumaturgic art Tadeo passed the examinations, was beloved[111]by the professors, and had before him a promising future.

Meanwhile, the groups began to move inside, for the professor of physics and chemistry had put in his appearance. The students appeared to be cheated in their hopes and went toward the interior of the building with exclamations of discontent. Placido went along with the crowd.

“Penitente, Penitente!” called a student with a certain mysterious air. “Sign this!”

“What is it?”

“Never mind—sign it!”

It seemed to Placido that some one was twitching his ears. He recalled the story of a cabeza de barangay in his town who, for having signed a document that he did not understand, was kept a prisoner for months

and months, and came near to deportation. An uncle of Placido's, in order to fix the lesson in his memory, had given him a severe ear-pulling, so that always whenever he heard signatures spoken of, his ears reproduced the sensation.

"Excuse me, but I can't sign anything without first understanding what it's about."

"What a fool you are! If two *celestial carbineers* have signed it, what have you to fear?"

The name of *celestial carbineers* inspired confidence, being, as it was, a sacred company created to aid God in the warfare against the evil spirit and to prevent the smuggling of heretical contraband into the markets of the New Zion.[4]

Placido was about to sign to make an end of it, because he was in a hurry,—already his classmates were reciting the *O Thoma*,—but again his ears twitched, so he said, "After the class! I want to read it first."

"It's very long, don't you see? It concerns the presentation of a counter-petition, or rather, a protest. Don't [112]you understand? Makaraig and some others have asked that an academy of Castilian be opened, which is a piece of genuine foolishness—"

“All right, all right, after awhile. They’re already beginning,” answered Placido, trying to get away.

“But your professor may not call the roll—”

“Yes, yes; but he calls it sometimes. Later on, later on! Besides, I don’t want to put myself in opposition to Makaraig.”

“But it’s not putting yourself in opposition, it’s only —”

Placido heard no more, for he was already far away, hurrying to his class. He heard the different voices—*adsum, adsum*—the roll was being called! Hastening his steps he got to the door just as the letter Q was reached.

“*Tinamáan ñg—!*”[5] he muttered, biting his lips.

He hesitated about entering, for the mark was already down against him and was not to be erased. One did not go to the class to learn but in order not to get this absence mark, for the class was reduced to reciting the lesson from memory, reading the book, and at the most answering a few abstract, profound, captious, enigmatic questions. True, the usual preachment was never lacking—the same as ever, about humility, submission, and respect to the clerics, and he,

Placido, was humble, submissive, and respectful. So he was about to turn away when he remembered that the examinations were approaching and his professor had not yet asked him a question nor appeared to notice him—this would be a good opportunity to attract his attention and become known! To be known was to gain a year, for if it cost nothing to suspend one who was not known, it required a hard heart not to be touched by the sight of a youth who by his daily presence was a reproach over a year of his life wasted.[113]

So Placido went in, not on tiptoe as was his custom, but noisily on his heels, and only too well did he succeed in his intent! The professor stared at him, knitted his brows, and shook his head, as though to say, "Ah, little impudence, you'll pay for that!"[114]

[1] The "Municipal School for Girls" was founded by the municipality of Manila in 1864.... The institution was in charge of the Sisters of Charity.—*Census of the Philippine Islands, Vol. III, p. 615*.

[2] Now known as Plaza España.—Tr.

[3] Patroness of the Dominican Order. She was formally and sumptuously recrowned a queen of the skies in 1907.—Tr.

[4] A burlesque on an association of students known as the *Milicia Angelica*, organized by the Dominicans to strengthen their hold on the people. The name used is significant, "carbineers" being the local revenue officers, notorious in their later days for graft and abuse.—Tr.

[5] "Tinamáan ñg lintik!"—a Tagalog exclamation of anger, disappointment, or dismay, regarded as a very strong expression, equivalent to profanity. Literally, "May the lightning strike you!"—Tr.

The Class in Physics

The classroom was a spacious rectangular hall with large grated windows that admitted an abundance of light and air. Along the two sides extended three wide tiers of stone covered with wood, filled with students arranged in alphabetical order. At the end opposite the entrance, under a print of St. Thomas Aquinas, rose the professor's chair on an elevated platform with a little stairway on each side. With the exception of a beautiful blackboard in a narra frame, scarcely ever used, since there was still written on it the *viva* that had appeared on the opening day, no furniture, either useful or useless, was to be seen. The walls, painted white and covered with glazed tiles to prevent scratches, were entirely bare, having neither a drawing nor a picture, nor even an outline of any physical apparatus. The students had no need of any, no one missed the practical instruction in an extremely experimental science; for years and years it has been so taught and the country has not been upset, but continues just as ever. Now and then some little instrument descended from heaven and was exhibited to the class from a distance, like the monstrance to the prostrate worshipers—look, but touch not! From time to time, when some complacent

professor appeared, one day in the year was set aside for visiting the mysterious laboratory and gazing from without at the puzzling apparatus arranged in glass cases. No one could complain, for on that day there were to be seen quantities of brass and glassware, tubes, disks, wheels, bells, and the like—the exhibition did not get beyond that, and the country was not upset.[115]

Besides, the students were convinced that those instruments had not been purchased for them—the friars would be fools! The laboratory was intended to be shown to the visitors and the high officials who came from the Peninsula, so that upon seeing it they would nod their heads with satisfaction, while their guide would smile, as if to say, “Eh, you thought you were going to find some backward monks! Well, we’re right up with the times—we have a laboratory!”

The visitors and high officials, after being handsomely entertained, would then write in their *Travels* or *Memoirs*: “The Royal and Pontifical University of Santo Tomas of Manila, in charge of the enlightened Dominican Order, possesses a magnificent physical laboratory for the instruction of youth. Some two hundred and fifty students annually

study this subject, but whether from apathy, indolence, the limited capacity of the Indian, or some other ethnological or incomprehensible reason, up to now there has not developed a Lavoisier, a Secchi, or a Tyndall, not even in miniature, in the Malay-Filipino race."

Yet, to be exact, we will say that in this laboratory are held the classes of thirty or forty *advanced* students, under the direction of an instructor who performs his duties well enough, but as the greater part of these students come from the Ateneo of the Jesuits, where science is taught practically in the laboratory itself, its utility does not come to be so great as it would be if it could be utilized by the two hundred and fifty who pay their matriculation fees, buy their books, memorize them, and waste a year to know nothing afterwards. As a result, with the exception of some rare usher or janitor who has had charge of the museum for years, no one has ever been known to get any advantage from the lessons memorized with so great effort.

But let us return to the class. The professor was a young Dominican, who had filled several chairs in San Juan de Letran with zeal and good repute. He had the reputation of being a great logician as well as

a profound [116]philosopher, and was one of the most promising in his clique. His elders treated him with consideration, while the younger men envied him, for there were also cliques among them. This was the third year of his professorship and, although the first in which he had taught physics and chemistry, he already passed for a sage, not only with the complaisant students but also among the other nomadic professors. Padre Millon did not belong to the common crowd who each year change their subject in order to acquire scientific knowledge, students among other students, with the difference only that they follow a single course, that they quiz instead of being quizzed, that they have a better knowledge of Castilian, and that they are not examined at the completion of the course. Padre Millon went deeply into science, knew the physics of Aristotle and Padre Amat, read carefully his "Ramos," and sometimes glanced at "Ganot." With all that, he would often shake his head with an air of doubt, as he smiled and murmured: "*transeat*." In regard to chemistry, no common knowledge was attributed to him after he had taken as a premise the statement of St. Thomas that water is a mixture and proved plainly that the Angelic Doctor had long forestalled Berzelius, Gay-Lussac, Bunsen, and other

more or less presumptuous materialists. Moreover, in spite of having been an instructor in geography, he still entertained certain doubts as to the rotundity of the earth and smiled maliciously when its rotation and revolution around the sun were mentioned, as he recited the verses

> "El mentir de las estrellas
> Es un cómodo mentir."[1]

He also smiled maliciously in the presence of certain physical theories and considered visionary, if not actually insane, the Jesuit Secchi, to whom he imputed the making of triangulations on the host as a result of his astronomical mania, for which reason it was said that he had been forbidden [117]to celebrate mass. Many persons also noticed in him some aversion to the sciences that he taught, but these vagaries were trifles, scholarly and religious prejudices that were easily explained, not only by the fact that the physical sciences were eminently practical, of pure observation and deduction, while his forte was philosophy, purely speculative, of abstraction and induction, but also because, like any good Dominican, jealous of the fame of his order, he could hardly feel any affection for a science in which none of his brethren had excelled—he was the first

who did not accept the chemistry of St. Thomas Aquinas—and in which so much renown had been acquired by hostile, or rather, let us say, rival orders.

This was the professor who that morning called the roll and directed many of the students to recite the lesson from memory, word for word. The phonographs got into operation, some well, some ill, some stammering, and received their grades. He who recited without an error earned a good mark and he who made more than three mistakes a bad mark.

A fat boy with a sleepy face and hair as stiff and hard as the bristles of a brush yawned until he seemed to be about to dislocate his jaws, and stretched himself with his arms extended as though he were in his bed. The professor saw this and wished to startle him.

“Eh, there, sleepy-head! What’s this? Lazy, too, so it’s sure you[2] don’t know the lesson, ha?”

Padre Millon not only used the depreciative *tu* with the students, like a good friar, but he also addressed them in the slang of the markets, a practise that he had acquired from the professor of canonical law: whether that reverend gentleman wished to humble the students or the sacred decrees of the councils is a

question not yet settled, in spite of the great attention that has been given to it.[118]

This question, instead of offending the class, amused them, and many laughed—it was a daily occurrence. But the sleeper did not laugh; he arose with a bound, rubbed his eyes, and, as though a steam-engine were turning the phonograph, began to recite.

“The name of mirror is applied to all polished surfaces intended to produce by the reflection of light the images of the objects placed before said surfaces. From the substances that form these surfaces, they are divided into metallic mirrors and glass mirrors—”

“Stop, stop, stop!” interrupted the professor. “Heavens, what a rattle! We are at the point where the mirrors are divided into metallic and glass, eh? Now if I should present to you a block of wood, a piece of kamagon for instance, well polished and varnished, or a slab of black marble well burnished, or a square of jet, which would reflect the images of objects placed before them, how would you classify those mirrors?”

Whether he did not know what to answer or did not understand the question, the student tried to get out of

the difficulty by demonstrating that he knew the lesson, so he rushed on like a torrent.

“The first are composed of brass or an alloy of different metals and the second of a sheet of glass, with its two sides well polished, one of which has an amalgam of tin adhering to it.”

“Tut, tut, tut! That’s not it! I say to you ‘*Dominus vobiscum*,’ and you answer me with ‘*Requiescat in pace!*’ ”

The worthy professor then repeated the question in the vernacular of the markets, interspersed with *cosas* and *abás* at every moment.

The poor youth did not know how to get out of the quandary: he doubted whether to include the kamagon with the metals, or the marble with glasses, and leave the jet as a neutral substance, until Juanito Pelaez maliciously prompted him:

“The mirror of kamagon among the wooden mirrors.”[119]

The incautious youth repeated this aloud and half the class was convulsed with laughter.

“A good sample of wood you are yourself!” exclaimed the professor, laughing in spite of himself.

“Let’s see from what you would define a mirror—from a surface *per se, in quantum est superficies*, or from a substance that forms the surface, or from the substance upon which the surface rests, the raw material, modified by the attribute ‘surface,’ since it is clear that, surface being an accidental property of bodies, it cannot exist without substance. Let’s see now—what do you say?”

“I? Nothing!” the wretched boy was about to reply, for he did not understand what it was all about, confused as he was by so many surfaces and so many accidents that smote cruelly on his ears, but a sense of shame restrained him. Filled with anguish and breaking into a cold perspiration, he began to repeat between his teeth: “The name of mirror is applied to all polished surfaces—”

“*Ergo, per te*, the mirror is the surface,” angled the professor. “Well, then, clear up this difficulty. If the surface is the mirror, it must be of no consequence to the ‘essence’ of the mirror what may be found behind this surface, since what is behind it does not affect the ‘essence’ that is before it, *id est*, the surface, *quae super faciem est, quia vocatur superficies, facies ea quae supra videtur*. Do you admit that or do you not admit it?”

The poor youth's hair stood up straighter than ever, as though acted upon by some magnetic force.

"Do you admit it or do you not admit it?"

"Anything! Whatever you wish, Padre," was his thought, but he did not dare to express it from fear of ridicule. That was a dilemma indeed, and he had never been in a worse one. He had a vague idea that the most innocent thing could not be admitted to the friars but that they, or rather their estates and curacies, would get out of it all the results and advantages imaginable. So his good angel prompted him to deny everything with all the energy [120]of his soul and refractoriness of his hair, and he was about to shout a proud *nego*, for the reason that he who denies everything does not compromise himself in anything, as a certain lawyer had once told him; but the evil habit of disregarding the dictates of one's own conscience, of having little faith in legal folk, and of seeking aid from others where one is sufficient unto himself, was his undoing. His companions, especially Juanito Pelaez, were making signs to him to admit it, so he let himself be carried away by his evil destiny and exclaimed, "*Concedo*, Padre," in a voice as faltering as though he were saying, "*In manus tuas commendo spiritum meum.*"

“*Concedo antecedentum*,” echoed the professor, smiling maliciously. “*Ergo*, I can scratch the mercury off a looking-glass, put in its place a piece of *bibinka*, and we shall still have a mirror, eh? Now what shall we have?”

The youth gazed at his prompters, but seeing them surprised and speechless, contracted his features into an expression of bitterest reproach. “*Deus meus, Deus meus, quare dereliquiste me,*” said his troubled eyes, while his lips muttered “*Linintikan!*” Vainly he coughed, fumbled at his shirt-bosom, stood first on one foot and then on the other, but found no answer.

“Come now, what have we?” urged the professor, enjoying the effect of his reasoning.

“*Bibinka!*” whispered Juanito Pelaez. “*Bibinka!*”

“Shut up, you fool!” cried the desperate youth, hoping to get out of the difficulty by turning it into a complaint.

“Let’s see, Juanito, if you can answer the question for me,” the professor then said to Pelaez, who was one of his pets.

The latter rose slowly, not without first giving Penitente, who followed him on the roll, a nudge that

meant, “Don’t forget to prompt me.”

“*Nego consequentiam*, Padre,” he replied resolutely.

“Aha, then *probo consequentiam! Per te*, the polished surface constitutes the ‘essence’ of the mirror—”[121]

“Nego suppositum!” interrupted Juanito, as he felt Placido pulling at his coat.

“How? *Per te*—”

“*Nego!*”

“*Ergo,* you believe that what is behind affects what is in front?”

“Nego!” the student cried with still more ardor, feeling another jerk at his coat.

Juanito, or rather Placido, who was prompting him, was unconsciously adopting Chinese tactics: not to admit the most inoffensive foreigner in order not to be invaded.

“Then where are we?” asked the professor, somewhat disconcerted, and looking uneasily at the refractory student. “Does the substance behind affect, or does it not affect, the surface?”

To this precise and categorical question, a kind of ultimatum, Juanito did not know what to reply and

his coat offered no suggestions. In vain he made signs to Placido, but Placido himself was in doubt. Juanito then took advantage of a moment in which the professor was staring at a student who was cautiously and secretly taking off the shoes that hurt his feet, to step heavily on Placido's toes and whisper, "Tell me, hurry up, tell me!"

"I distinguish—Get out! What an ass you are!" yelled Placido unreservedly, as he stared with angry eyes and rubbed his hand over his patent-leather shoe.

The professor heard the cry, stared at the pair, and guessed what had happened.

"Listen, you meddler," he addressed Placido, "I wasn't questioning you, but since you think you can save others, let's see if you can save yourself, *salva te ipsum,* and decide this question."

Juanito sat down in content, and as a mark of gratitude stuck out his tongue at his prompter, who had arisen blushing with shame and muttering incoherent excuses.

For a moment Padre Millon regarded him as one gloating over a favorite dish. What a good thing it would be [122]to humiliate and hold up to ridicule that dudish boy, always smartly dressed, with head erect

and serene look! It would be a deed of charity, so the charitable professor applied himself to it with all his heart, slowly repeating the question.

“The book says that the metallic mirrors are made of brass and an alloy of different metals—is that true or is it not true?”

“So the book says, Padre.”

“*Liber dixit, ergo ita est*. Don’t pretend that you know more than the book does. It then adds that the glass mirrors are made of a sheet of glass whose two surfaces are well polished, one of them having applied to it an amalgam of tin, *nota bene*, an amalgam of tin! Is that true?”

“If the book says so, Padre.”

“Is tin a metal?”

“It seems so, Padre. The book says so.”

“It is, it is, and the word amalgam means that it is compounded with mercury, which is also a metal. *Ergo*, a glass mirror is a metallic mirror; *ergo*, the terms of the distinction are confused; *ergo*, the classification is imperfect—how do you explain that, meddler?”

He emphasized the *ergos* and the familiar “you’s” with indescribable relish, at the same time winking, as though to say, “You’re done for.”

“It means that, it means that—” stammered Placido.

“It means that you haven’t learned the lesson, you petty meddler, you don’t understand it yourself, and yet you prompt your neighbor!”

The class took no offense, but on the contrary many thought the epithet funny and laughed. Placido bit his lips.

“What’s your name?” the professor asked him.

“Placido,” was the curt reply.

“Aha! Placido Penitente, although you look more like Placido the Prompter—or the Prompted. But, *Penitent*, I’m going to impose some *penance* on you for your promptings.”[123]

Pleased with his play on words, he ordered the youth to recite the lesson, and the latter, in the state of mind to which he was reduced, made more than three mistakes. Shaking his head up and down, the professor slowly opened the register and slowly scanned it while he called off the names in a low voice.

“Palencia—Palomo—Panganiban—Pedraza—Pelado—Pelaez—Penitents, aha! Placido Penitente, fifteen unexcused absences—”

Placido started up. “Fifteen absences, Padre?”

“Fifteen unexcused absences,” continued the professor, “so that you only lack one to be dropped from the roll.”

“Fifteen absences, fifteen absences,” repeated Placido in amazement. “I’ve never been absent more than four times, and with today, perhaps five.”

“Jesso, jesso, monseer,”[3] replied the professor, examining the youth over his gold eye-glasses. “You confess that you have missed five times, and God knows if you may have missed oftener. *Atqui*, as I rarely call the roll, every time I catch any one I put five marks against him; *ergo*, how many are five times five? Have you forgotten the multiplication table? Five times five?”

“Twenty-five.”

“Correct, correct! Thus you’ve still got away with ten, because I have caught you only three times. Huh, if I had caught you every time—Now, how many are three times five?”

“Fifteen.”

“Fifteen, right you are!” concluded the professor, closing the register. “If you miss once more—out of doors with you, get out! Ah, now a mark for the failure in the daily lesson.”

He again opened the register, sought out the name, and entered the mark. “Come, only one mark,” he said, “since you hadn’t any before.”[124]

“But, Padre,” exclaimed Placido, restraining himself, “if your Reverence puts a mark against me for failing in the lesson, your Reverence owes it to me to erase the one for absence that you have put against me for today.”

His Reverence made no answer. First he slowly entered the mark, then contemplated it with his head on one side,—the mark must be artistic,—closed the register, and asked with great sarcasm, “*Abá*, and why so, sir?”

“Because I can’t conceive, Padre, how one can be absent from the class and at the same time recite the lesson in it. Your Reverence is saying that to be is not to be.”

“*Nakú*, a metaphysician, but a rather premature one! So you can’t conceive of it, eh? *Sed patet experientia* and *contra experientiam negantem, fusilibus est arguendum*, do you understand? And can’t you conceive, with your philosophical head, that one can be absent from the class and not know the lesson at the same time? Is it a fact that absence necessarily implies knowledge? What do you say to that, philosophaster?”

This last epithet was the drop of water that made the full cup overflow. Placido enjoyed among his friends the reputation of being a philosopher, so he lost his patience, threw down his book, arose, and faced the professor.

“Enough, Padre, enough! Your Reverence can put all the marks against me that you wish, but you haven’t the right to insult me. Your Reverence may stay with the class, I can’t stand any more.” Without further farewell, he stalked away.

The class was astounded; such an assumption of dignity had scarcely ever been seen, and who would have thought it of Placido Penitente? The surprised professor bit his lips and shook his head threateningly as he watched him depart. Then in a trembling voice

he began his preachment on the same old theme, delivered however with more energy and more eloquence. It dealt with the growing arrogance, the innate ingratitude, the presumption, the lack of respect for superiors, the pride that the spirit of darkness infused in the[125]young, the lack of manners, the absence of courtesy, and so on. From this he passed to coarse jests and sarcasm over the presumption which some good-for-nothing "prompters" had of teaching their teachers by establishing an academy for instruction in Castilian.

"Aha, aha!" he moralized, "those who the day before yesterday scarcely knew how to say, 'Yes, Padre,' 'No, Padre,' now want to know more than those who have grown gray teaching them. He who wishes to learn, will learn, academies or no academies! Undoubtedly that fellow who has just gone out is one of those in the project. Castilian is in good hands with such guardians! When are you going to get the time to attend the academy if you have scarcely enough to fulfill your duties in the regular classes? We wish that you may all know Spanish and that you pronounce it well, so that you won't split our ear-drums with your twist of expression and your 'p's';[4] but first business and then pleasure: finish your

studies first, and afterwards learn Castilian, and all become clerks, if you so wish."

So he went on with his harangue until the bell rang and the class was over. The two hundred and thirty-four students, after reciting their prayers, went out as ignorant as when they went in, but breathing more freely, as if a great weight had been lifted from them. Each youth had lost another hour of his life and with it a portion of his dignity and self-respect, and in exchange there was an increase of discontent, of aversion to study, of resentment in their hearts. After all this ask for knowledge, dignity, gratitude!

De nobis, post haec, tristis sententia fertur!

Just as the two hundred and thirty-four spent their class hours, so the thousands of students who preceded them have spent theirs, and, if matters do not mend, so will those yet to come spend theirs, and be brutalized, while wounded dignity and youthful enthusiasm will be converted into [126]hatred and sloth, like the waves that become polluted along one part of the shore and roll on one after another, each in succession depositing a larger sediment of filth. But yet He who from eternity watches the consequences of a deed develop like a thread through the loom of

the centuries, He who weighs the value of a second and has ordained for His creatures as an elemental law progress and development, He, if He is just, will demand a strict accounting from those who must render it, of the millions of intelligences darkened and blinded, of human dignity trampled upon in millions of His creatures, and of the incalculable time lost and effort wasted! And if the teachings of the Gospel are based on truth, so also will these have to answer—the millions and millions who do not know how to preserve the light of their intelligences and their dignity of mind, as the master demanded an accounting from the cowardly servant for the talent that he let be taken from him.[127]

[1] "To lie about the stars is a safe kind of lying."—Tr.

[2] Throughout this chapter the professor uses the familiar *tu* in addressing the students, thus giving his remarks a contemptuous tone.—Tr.

[3] The professor speaks these words in vulgar dialect.

[4] To confuse the letters *p* and *f* in speaking Spanish was a common error among uneducated Filipinos. —Tr.

In the House of the Students

The house where Makaraig lived was worth visiting. Large and spacious, with two entresols provided with elegant gratings, it seemed to be a school during the first hours of the morning and pandemonium from ten o'clock on. During the boarders' recreation hours, from the lower hallway of the spacious entrance up to the main floor, there was a bubbling of laughter, shouts, and movement. Boys in scanty clothing played *sipa* or practised gymnastic exercises on improvised trapezes, while on the staircase a fight was in progress between eight or nine armed with canes, sticks, and ropes, but neither attackers nor attacked did any great damage, their blows generally falling sidewise upon the shoulders of the Chinese pedler who was there selling his outlandish mixtures and indigestible pastries. Crowds of boys surrounded him, pulled at his already disordered queue, snatched pies from him, haggled over the prices, and committed a thousand deviltries. The Chinese yelled, swore, forswore, in all the languages he could jabber, not omitting his own; he whimpered, laughed, pleaded, put on a smiling face when an ugly one would not serve, or the reverse.

He cursed them as devils, savages, *no kilistanos*[1] but that mattered nothing. A whack would bring his face around smiling, and if the blow fell only upon his shoulders he would calmly continue his business transactions, contenting himself with crying out to them that he was not in the game, but if it struck the flat basket on which were placed his wares, then he would swear never to come again, as he[128]poured out upon them all the imprecations and anathemas imaginable. Then the boys would redouble their efforts to make him rage the more, and when at last his vocabulary was exhausted and they were satiated with his fearful mixtures, they paid him religiously, and sent him away happy, winking, chuckling to himself, and receiving as caresses the light blows from their canes that the students gave him as tokens of farewell.

Concerts on the piano and violin, the guitar, and the accordion, alternated with the continual clashing of blades from the fencing lessons. Around a long, wide table the students of the Ateneo prepared their compositions or solved their problems by the side of others writing to their sweethearts on pink perforated note-paper covered with drawings. Here one was composing a melodrama at the side of another

practising on the flute, from which he drew wheezy notes. Over there, the older boys, students in professional courses, who affected silk socks and embroidered slippers, amused themselves in teasing the smaller boys by pulling their ears, already red from repeated fillips, while two or three held down a little fellow who yelled and cried, defending himself with his feet against being reduced to the condition in which he was born, kicking and howling. In one room, around a small table, four were playing *revesino*with laughter and jokes, to the great annoyance of another who pretended to be studying his lesson but who was in reality waiting his turn to play.

Still another came in with exaggerated wonder, scandalized as he approached the table. “How wicked you are! So early in the morning and already gambling! Let’s see, let’s see! You fool, take it with the three of spades!” Closing his book, he too joined in the game.

Cries and blows were heard. Two boys were fighting in the adjoining room—a lame student who was very sensitive about his infirmity and an unhappy newcomer from the provinces who was just commencing his studies. He was working over a

treatise on philosophy and reading innocently [129]in a loud voice, with a wrong accent, the Cartesian principle: "*Cogito, ergo sum!*"

The little lame boy (*el cojito*) took this as an insult and the others intervened to restore peace, but in reality only to sow discord and come to blows themselves.

In the dining-room a young man with a can of sardines, a bottle of wine, and the provisions that he had just brought from his town, was making heroic efforts to the end that his friends might participate in his lunch, while they were offering in their turn heroic resistance to his invitation. Others were bathing on the azotea, playing firemen with the water from the well, and joining in combats with pails of water, to the great delight of the spectators.

But the noise and shouts gradually died away with the coming of leading students, summoned by Makaraig to report to them the progress of the academy of Castilian. Isagani was cordially greeted, as was also the Peninsular, Sandoval, who had come to Manila as a government employee and was finishing his studies, and who had completely identified himself with the cause of the Filipino

students. The barriers that politics had established between the races had disappeared in the schoolroom as though dissolved by the zeal of science and youth.

From lack of lyceums and scientific, literary, or political centers, Sandoval took advantage of all the meetings to cultivate his great oratorical gifts, delivering speeches and arguing on any subject, to draw forth applause from his friends and listeners. At that moment the subject of conversation was the instruction in Castilian, but as Makaraig had not yet arrived conjecture was still the order of the day.

“What can have happened?”

“What has the General decided?”

“Has he refused the permit?”

“Has Padre Irene or Padre Sibyla won?”

Such were the questions they asked one another, questions that could be answered only by Makaraig. [130]

Among the young men gathered together there were optimists like Isagani and Sandoval, who saw the thing already accomplished and talked of congratulations and praise from the government for the patriotism of the students—outbursts of optimism

that led Juanito Pelaez to claim for himself a large part of the glory of founding the society.

All this was answered by the pessimist Pecson, a chubby youth with a wide, clownish grin, who spoke of outside influences, whether the Bishop A., the Padre B., or the Provincial C., had been consulted or not, whether or not they had advised that the whole association should be put in jail—a suggestion that made Juanito Pelaez so uneasy that he stammered out, "*Carambas*, don't you drag me into—"

Sandoval, as a Peninsular and a liberal, became furious at this. "But pshaw!" he exclaimed, "that is holding a bad opinion of his Excellency! I know that he's quite a friar-lover, but in such a matter as this he won't let the friars interfere. Will you tell me, Pecson, on what you base your belief that the General has no judgment of his own?"

"I didn't say that, Sandoval," replied Pecson, grinning until he exposed his wisdom-tooth. "For me the General has *his own* judgment, that is, the judgment of all those within his reach. That's plain!"

"You're dodging—cite me a fact, cite me a fact!" cried Sandoval. "Let's get away from hollow arguments, from empty phrases, and get on the solid

ground of facts,"—this with an elegant gesture. "Facts, gentlemen, facts! The rest is prejudice—I won't call it filibusterism."

Pecson smiled like one of the blessed as he retorted, "There comes the filibusterism. But can't we enter into a discussion without resorting to accusations?"

Sandoval protested in a little extemporaneous speech, again demanding facts.

"Well, not long ago there was a dispute between some private persons and certain friars, and the acting Governor [131]rendered a decision that it should be settled by the Provincial of the Order concerned," replied Pecson, again breaking out into a laugh, as though he were dealing with an insignificant matter, he cited names and dates, and promised documents that would prove how justice was dispensed.

"But, on what ground, tell me this, on what ground can they refuse permission for what plainly appears to be extremely useful and necessary?" asked Sandoval.

Pecson shrugged his shoulders. "It's that it endangers the integrity of the fatherland," he replied in the tone of a notary reading an allegation.

“That’s pretty good! What has the integrity of the fatherland to do with the rules of syntax?”

“The Holy Mother Church has learned doctors—what do I know? Perhaps it is feared that we may come to understand the laws so that we can obey them. What will become of the Philippines on the day when we understand one another?”

Sandoval did not relish the dialectic and jesting turn of the conversation; along that path could rise no speech worth the while. “Don’t make a joke of things!” he exclaimed. “This is a serious matter.”

“The Lord deliver me from joking when there are friars concerned!”

“But, on what do you base—”

“On the fact that, the hours for the classes having to come at night,” continued Pecson in the same tone, as if he were quoting known and recognized formulas, “there may be invoked as an obstacle the immorality of the thing, as was done in the case of the school at Malolos.”

“Another! But don’t the classes of the Academy of Drawing, and the novenaries and the processions, cover themselves with the mantle of night?”

“The scheme affects the dignity of the University,” went on the chubby youth, taking no notice of the question.

“Affects nothing! The University has to accommodate [132]itself to the needs of the students. And granting that, what is a university then? Is it an institution to discourage study? Have a few men banded themselves together in the name of learning and instruction in order to prevent others from becoming enlightened?”

“The fact is that movements initiated from below are regarded as discontent—”

“What about projects that come from above?” interpolated one of the students. “There’s the School of Arts and Trades!”

“Slowly, slowly, gentlemen,” protested Sandoval. “I’m not a friar-lover, my liberal views being well known, but render unto Caesar that which is Caesar’s. Of that School of Arts and Trades, of which I have been the most enthusiastic supporter and the realization of which I shall greet as the first streak of dawn for these fortunate islands, of that School of Arts and Trades the friars have taken charge—”

“Or the cat of the canary, which amounts to the same thing,” added Pecson, in his turn interrupting the speech.

“Get out!” cried Sandoval, enraged at the interruption, which had caused him to lose the thread of his long, well-rounded sentence. “As long as we hear nothing bad, let’s not be pessimists, let’s not be unjust, doubting the liberty and independence of the government.”

Here he entered upon a defense in beautiful phraseology of the government and its good intentions, a subject that Pecson dared not break in upon.

“The Spanish government,” he said among other things, “has given you everything, it has denied you nothing! We had absolutism in Spain and you had absolutism here; the friars covered our soil with conventos, and conventos occupy a third part of Manila; in Spain the garrote prevails and here the garrote is the extreme punishment; we are Catholics and we have made you Catholics; we were scholastics and scholasticism sheds its light in your college halls; in short, gentlemen, we weep when you weep, we suffer when [133]you suffer, we have the

same altars, the same courts, the same punishments, and it is only just that we should give you our rights and our joys."

As no one interrupted him, he became more and more enthusiastic, until he came to speak of the future of the Philippines.

"As I have said, gentlemen, the dawn is not far distant. Spain is now breaking the eastern sky for her beloved Philippines, and the times are changing, as I positively know, faster than we imagine. This government, which, according to you, is vacillating and weak, should be strengthened by our confidence, that we may make it see that it is the custodian of our hopes. Let us remind it by our conduct (should it ever forget itself, which I do not believe can happen) that we have faith in its good intentions and that it should be guided by no other standard than justice and the welfare of all the governed. No, gentlemen," he went on in a tone more and more declamatory, "we must not admit at all in this matter the possibility of a consultation with other more or less hostile entities, as such a supposition would imply our resignation to the fact. Your conduct up to the present has been frank, loyal, without vacillation, above suspicion; you have addressed it simply and directly; the

reasons you have presented could not be more sound; your aim is to lighten the labor of the teachers in the first years and to facilitate study among the hundreds of students who fill the college halls and for whom one solitary professor cannot suffice. If up to the present the petition has not been granted, it has been for the reason, as I feel sure, that there has been a great deal of material accumulated, but I predict that the campaign is won, that the summons of Makaraig is to announce to us the victory, and tomorrow we shall see our efforts crowned with the applause and appreciation of the country, and who knows, gentlemen, but that the government may confer upon you some handsome decoration of merit, benefactors as you are of the fatherland!"[134]

Enthusiastic applause resounded. All immediately believed in the triumph, and many in the decoration.

"Let it be remembered, gentlemen," observed Juanito, "that I was one of the first to propose it."

The pessimist Pecson was not so enthusiastic. "Just so we don't get that decoration on our ankles," he remarked, but fortunately for Pelaez this comment was not heard in the midst of the applause.

When they had quieted down a little, Pecson replied, “Good, good, very good, but one supposition: if in spite of all that, the General consults and consults and consults, and afterwards refuses the permit?”

This question fell like a dash of cold water. All turned to Sandoval, who was taken aback. “Then—” he stammered.

“Then?”

“Then,” he exclaimed in a burst of enthusiasm, still excited by the applause, “seeing that in writing and in printing it boasts of desiring your enlightenment, and yet hinders and denies it when called upon to make it a reality—then, gentlemen, your efforts will not have been in vain, you will have accomplished what no one else has been able to do. Make them drop the mask and fling down the gauntlet to you!”

“Bravo, bravo!” cried several enthusiastically.

“Good for Sandoval! Hurrah for the gauntlet!” added others.

“Let them fling down the gauntlet to us!” repeated Pecson disdainfully. “But afterwards?”

Sandoval seemed to be cut short in his triumph, but with the vivacity peculiar to his race and his

oratorical temperament he had an immediate reply.

“Afterwards?” he asked. “Afterwards, if none of the Filipinos dare to accept the challenge, then I, Sandoval, in the name of Spain, will take up the gauntlet, because such a policy would give the lie to the good intentions that she has always cherished toward her provinces, and because [135]he who is thus faithless to the trust reposed in him and abuses his unlimited authority deserves neither the protection of the fatherland nor the support of any Spanish citizen!”

The enthusiasm of his hearers broke all bounds. Isagani embraced him, the others following his example. They talked of the fatherland, of union, of fraternity, of fidelity. The Filipinos declared that if there were only Sandovals in Spain all would be Sandovals in the Philippines. His eyes glistened, and it might well be believed that if at that moment any kind of gauntlet had been flung at him he would have leaped upon any kind of horse to ride to death for the Philippines.

The “cold water” alone replied: “Good, that’s very good, Sandoval. I could also say the same if I were a Peninsular, but not being one, if I should say one half

of what you have, you yourself would take me for a filibuster."

Sandoval began a speech in protest, but was interrupted.

"Rejoice, friends, rejoice! Victory!" cried a youth who entered at that moment and began to embrace everybody.

"Rejoice, friends! Long live the Castilian tongue!"

An outburst of applause greeted this announcement. They fell to embracing one another and their eyes filled with tears. Pecson alone preserved his skeptical smile.

The bearer of such good news was Makaraig, the young man at the head of the movement. This student occupied in that house, by himself, two rooms, luxuriously furnished, and had his servant and a cochero to look after his carriage and horses. He was of robust carriage, of refined manners, fastidiously dressed, and very rich. Although studying law only that he might have an academic degree, he enjoyed a reputation for diligence, and as a logician in the scholastic way had no cause to envy the most frenzied quibblers of the University faculty. Nevertheless he was not very far behind in regard to

modern ideas and progress, for his fortune enabled him to have all the books and magazines that [136]a watchful censor was unable to keep out. With these qualifications and his reputation for courage, his fortunate associations in his earlier years, and his refined and delicate courtesy, it was not strange that he should exercise such great influence over his associates and that he should have been chosen to carry out such a difficult undertaking as that of the instruction in Castilian.

After the first outburst of enthusiasm, which in youth always takes hold in such exaggerated forms, since youth finds everything beautiful, they wanted to be informed how the affair had been managed.

“I saw Padre Irene this morning,” said Makaraig with a certain air of mystery.

“Hurrah for Padre Irene!” cried an enthusiastic student.

“Padre Irene,” continued Makaraig, “has told me about everything that took place at Los Baños. It seems that they disputed for at least a week, he supporting and defending our case against all of them, against Padre Sibyla, Padre Fernandez, Padre Salvi, the General, the jeweler Simoun—”

“The jeweler Simoun!” interrupted one of his listeners. “What has that Jew to do with the affairs of our country? We enrich him by buying—”

“Keep quiet!” admonished another impatiently, anxious to learn how Padre Irene had been able to overcome such formidable opponents.

“There were even high officials who were opposed to our project, the Head Secretary, the Civil Governor, Quiroga the Chinaman—”

“Quiroga the Chinaman! The pimp of the—”

“Shut up!”

“At last,” resumed Makaraig, “they were going to pigeonhole the petition and let it sleep for months and months, when Padre Irene remembered the Superior Commission of Primary Instruction and proposed, since the matter concerned the teaching of the Castilian tongue, that [137]the petition be referred to that body for a report upon it.”

“But that Commission hasn’t been in operation for a long time,” observed Pecson.

“That’s exactly what they replied to Padre Irene, and he answered that this was a good opportunity to revive it, and availing himself of the presence of Don

Custodio, one of its members, he proposed on the spot that a committee should be appointed. Don Custodio's activity being known and recognized, he was named as arbiter and the petition is now in his hands. He promised that he would settle it this month."

"Hurrah for Don Custodio!"

"But suppose Don Custodio should report unfavorably upon it?" inquired the pessimist Pecson.

Upon this they had not reckoned, being intoxicated with the thought that the matter would not be pigeonholed, so they all turned to Makaraig to learn how it could be arranged.

"The same objection I presented to Padre Irene, but with his sly smile he said to me: 'We've won a great deal, we have succeeded in getting the matter on the road to a decision, the opposition sees itself forced to join battle.' If we can bring some influence to bear upon Don Custodio so that he, in accordance with his liberal tendencies, may report favorably, all is won, for the General showed himself to be absolutely neutral."

Makaraig paused, and an impatient listener asked, "How can we influence him?"

“Padre Irene pointed out to me two ways—”

“Quiroga,” some one suggested.

“Pshaw, great use Quiroga—”

“A fine present.”

“No, that won’t do, for he prides himself upon being incorruptible.”

“Ah, yes, I know!” exclaimed Pecson with a laugh. “Pepay the dancing girl.” [138]“Ah, yes, Pepay the dancing girl,” echoed several.

This Pepay was a showy girl, supposed to be a great friend of Don Custodio. To her resorted the contractors, the employees, the intriguers, when they wanted to get something from the celebrated councilor. Juanito Pelaez, who was also a great friend of the dancing girl, offered to look after the matter, but Isagani shook his head, saying that it was sufficient that they had made use of Padre Irene and that it would be going too far to avail themselves of Pepay in such an affair.

“Show us the other way.”

“The other way is to apply to his attorney and adviser, Señor Pasta, the oracle before whom Don

Custodio bows."

"I prefer that," said Isagani. "Señor Pasta is a Filipino, and was a schoolmate of my uncle's. But how can we interest him?"

"There's the *quid*," replied Makaraig, looking earnestly at Isagani. "Señor Pasta has a dancing girl —I mean, a seamstress."

Isagani again shook his head.

"Don't be such a puritan," Juanito Pelaez said to him. "The end justifies the means! I know the seamstress, Matea, for she has a shop where a lot of girls work."

"No, gentlemen," declared Isagani, "let's first employ decent methods. I'll go to Señor Pasta and, if I don't accomplish anything, then you can do what you wish with the dancing girls and seamstresses."

They had to accept this proposition, agreeing that Isagani should talk to Señor Pasta that very day, and in the afternoon report to his associates at the University the result of the interview.[139]

[1] *No cristianos*, not Christians, *i.e*., savages.—Tr.

Señor Pasta

Isagani presented himself in the house of the lawyer, one of the most talented minds in Manila, whom the friars consulted in their great difficulties. The youth had to wait some time on account of the numerous clients, but at last his turn came and he entered the office, or *bufete*, as it is generally called in the Philippines. The lawyer received him with a slight cough, looking down furtively at his feet, but he did not rise or offer a seat, as he went on writing. This gave Isagani an opportunity for observation and careful study of the lawyer, who had aged greatly. His hair was gray and his baldness extended over nearly the whole crown of his head. His countenance was sour and austere.

There was complete silence in the study, except for the whispers of the clerks and understudies who were at work in an adjoining room. Their pens scratched as though quarreling with the paper.

At length the lawyer finished what he was writing, laid down his pen, raised his head, and, recognizing the youth, let his face light up with a smile as he extended his hand affectionately.

“Welcome, young man! But sit down, and excuse me, for I didn’t know that it was you. How is your uncle?”

Isagani took courage, believing that his case would get on well. He related briefly what had been done, the while studying the effect of his words. Señor Pasta listened impassively at first and, although he was informed of the efforts of the students, pretended ignorance, as if to show that he had nothing to do with such childish matters, but when he began to suspect what was wanted of him and [140]heard mention of the Vice-Rector, friars, the Captain-General, a project, and so on, his face slowly darkened and he finally exclaimed, “This is the land of projects! But go on, go on!”

Isagani was not yet discouraged. He spoke of the manner in which a decision was to be reached and concluded with an expression of the confidence which the young men entertained that he, Señor Pasta, would *intercede* in their behalf in case Don Custodio should consult him, as was to be expected. He did not dare to say would *advise*, deterred by the wry face the lawyer put on.

But Señor Pasta had already formed his resolution, and it was not to mix at all in the affair, either as consulter or consulted. He was familiar with what had occurred at Los Baños, he knew that there existed two factions, and that Padre Irene was not the only champion on the side of the students, nor had he been the one who proposed submitting the petition to the Commission of Primary Instruction, but quite the contrary. Padre Irene, Padre Fernandez, the Countess, a merchant who expected to sell the materials for the new academy, and the high official who had been citing royal decree after royal decree, were about to triumph, when Padre Sibyla, wishing to gain time, had thought of the Commission. All these facts the great lawyer had present in his mind, so that when Isagani had finished speaking, he determined to confuse him with evasions, tangle the matter up, and lead the conversation to other subjects.

“Yes,” he said, pursing his lips and scratching his head, “there is no one who surpasses me in love for the country and in aspirations toward progress, but—I can’t compromise myself, I don’t know whether you clearly understand my position, a position that is very delicate, I have so many interests, I have to

labor within the limits of strict prudence, it's a risk —"

The lawyer sought to bewilder the youth with an exuberance of words, so he went on speaking of laws and [141]decrees, and talked so much that instead of confusing the youth, he came very near to entangling himself in a labyrinth of citations.

"In no way do we wish to compromise you," replied Isagani with great calmness. "God deliver us from injuring in the least the persons whose lives are so useful to the rest of the Filipinos! But, as little versed as I may be in the laws, royal decrees, writs, and resolutions that obtain in this country, I can't believe that there can be any harm in furthering the high purposes of the government, in trying to secure a proper interpretation of these purposes. We are seeking the same end and differ only about the means."

The lawyer smiled, for the youth had allowed himself to wander away from the subject, and there where the former was going to entangle him he had already entangled himself.

"That's exactly the *quid*, as is vulgarly said. It's clear that it is laudable to aid the government, when one

aids it submissively, following out its desires and the true spirit of the laws in agreement with the just beliefs of the governing powers, and when not in contradiction to the fundamental and general way of thinking of the persons to whom is intrusted the common welfare of the individuals that form a social organism. Therefore, it is criminal, it is punishable, because it is offensive to the high principle of authority, to attempt any action contrary to its initiative, even supposing it to be better than the governmental proposition, because such action would injure its prestige, which is the elementary basis upon which all colonial edifices rest."

Confident that this broadside had at least stunned Isagani, the old lawyer fell back in his armchair, outwardly very serious, but laughing to himself.

Isagani, however, ventured to reply. "I should think that governments, the more they are threatened, would be all the more careful to seek bases that are impregnable. The basis of prestige for colonial governments is the weakest [142]of all, since it does not depend upon themselves but upon the consent of the governed, while the latter are willing to recognize it. The basis of justice or reason would seem to be the most durable."

The lawyer raised his head. How was this—did that youth dare to reply and argue with him, *him*, Señor Pasta? Was he not yet bewildered with his big words?

“Young man, you must put those considerations aside, for they are dangerous,” he declared with a wave of his hand. “What I advise is that you let the government attend to its own business.”

“Governments are established for the welfare of the peoples, and in order to accomplish this purpose properly they have to follow the suggestions of the citizens, who are the ones best qualified to understand their own needs.”

“Those who constitute the government are also citizens, and among the most enlightened.”

“But, being men, they are fallible, and ought not to disregard the opinions of others.”

“They must be trusted, they have to attend to everything.”

“There is a Spanish proverb which says, ‘No tears, no milk,’ in other words, ‘To him who does not ask, nothing is given.’ ”

“Quite the reverse,” replied the lawyer with a sarcastic smile; “with the government exactly the

reverse occurs—”

But he suddenly checked himself, as if he had said too much and wished to correct his imprudence. “The government has given us things that we have not asked for, and that we could not ask for, because to ask—to ask, presupposes that it is in some way incompetent and consequently is not performing its functions. To suggest to it a course of action, to try to guide it, when not really antagonizing it, is to presuppose that it is capable of erring, and as I have already said to you such suppositions are menaces to the existence of colonial governments. The common crowd overlooks this and the young men who set to work thoughtlessly [143]do not know, do not comprehend, do not try to comprehend the counter-effect of asking, the menace to order there is in that idea—”

“Pardon me,” interrupted Isagani, offended by the arguments the jurist was using with him, “but when by legal methods people ask a government for something, it is because they think it good and disposed to grant a blessing, and such action, instead of irritating it, should flatter it —to the mother one appeals, never to the stepmother. The government, in my humble opinion, is not an omniscient being that

can see and anticipate everything, and even if it could, it ought not to feel offended, for here you have the church itself doing nothing but asking and begging of God, who sees and knows everything, and you yourself ask and demand many things in the courts of this same government, yet neither God nor the courts have yet taken offense. Every one realizes that the government, being the human institution that it is, needs the support of all the people, it needs to be made to see and feel the reality of things. You yourself are not convinced of the truth of your objection, you yourself know that it is a tyrannical and despotic government which, in order to make a display of force and independence, denies everything through fear or distrust, and that the tyrannized and enslaved peoples are the only ones whose duty it is never to ask for anything. A people that hates its government ought to ask for nothing but that it abdicate its power."

The old lawyer grimaced and shook his head from side to side, in sign of discontent, while he rubbed his hand over his bald pate and said in a tone of condescending pity: "Ahem! those are bad doctrines, bad theories, ahem! How plain it is that you are young and inexperienced in life. Look what is

happening with the inexperienced young men who in Madrid are asking for so many reforms. They are accused of filibusterism, many of them don't dare return here, and yet, what are they asking for? Things holy, ancient, and recognized as quite harmless. But there [144]are matters that can't be explained, they're so delicate. Let's see—I confess to you that there are other reasons besides those expressed that might lead a sensible government to deny systematically the wishes of the people—no—but it may happen that we find ourselves under rulers so fatuous and ridiculous—but there are always other reasons, even though what is asked be quite just—different governments encounter different conditions—"

The old man hesitated, stared fixedly at Isagani, and then with a sudden resolution made a sign with his hand as though he would dispel some idea.

"I can guess what you mean," said Isagani, smiling sadly. "You mean that a colonial government, for the very reason that it is imperfectly constituted and that it is based on premises—"

"No, no, not that, no!" quickly interrupted the old lawyer, as he sought for something among his papers. "No, I meant—but where are my spectacles?"

“There they are,” replied Isagani.

The old man put them on and pretended to look over some papers, but seeing that the youth was waiting, he mumbled, “I wanted to tell you something, I wanted to say—but it has slipped from my mind. You interrupted me in your eagerness—but it was an insignificant matter. If you only knew what a whirl my head is in, I have so much to do!”

Isagani understood that he was being dismissed. “So,” he said, rising, “we—”

“Ah, you will do well to leave the matter in the hands of the government, which will settle it as it sees fit. You say that the Vice-Rector is opposed to the teaching of Castilian. Perhaps he may be, not as to the fact but as to the form. It is said that the Rector who is on his way will bring a project for reform in education. Wait a while, give time a chance, apply yourself to your studies as the examinations are near, and—*carambas!*—you who already speak Castilian and express yourself easily, what [145]are you bothering yourself about? What interest have you in seeing it specially taught? Surely Padre Florentino thinks as I do! Give him my regards.”

“My uncle,” replied Isagani, “has always admonished me to think of others as much as of myself. I didn’t come for myself, I came in the name of those who are in worse condition.”

“What the devil! Let them do as you have done, let them singe their eyebrows studying and come to be bald like myself, stuffing whole paragraphs into their memories! I believe that if you talk Spanish it is because you have studied it—you’re not of Manila or of Spanish parents! Then let them learn it as you have, and do as I have done: I’ve been a servant to all the friars, I’ve prepared their chocolate, and while with my right hand I stirred it, with the left I held a grammar, I learned, and, thank God! have never needed other teachers or academies or permits from the government. Believe me, he who wishes to learn, learns and becomes wise!”

“But how many among those who wish to learn come to be what you are? One in ten thousand, and more!”

“Pish! Why any more?” retorted the old man, shrugging his shoulders. “There are too many lawyers now, many of them become mere clerks. Doctors? They insult and abuse one another, and even kill each other in competition for a patient.

Laborers, sir, laborers, are what we need, for agriculture!”

Isagani realized that he was losing time, but still could not forbear replying: “Undoubtedly, there are many doctors and lawyers, but I won’t say there are too many, since we have towns that lack them entirely, and if they do abound in quantity, perhaps they are deficient in quality. Since the young men can’t be prevented from studying, and no other professions are open to us, why let them waste their time and effort? And if the instruction, deficient as it is, does not keep many from becoming lawyers and doctors, if we must finally have them, why not have good [146]ones? After all, even if the sole wish is to make the country a country of farmers and laborers, and condemn in it all intellectual activity, I don’t see any evil in enlightening those same farmers and laborers, in giving them at least an education that will aid them in perfecting themselves and in perfecting their work, in placing them in a condition to understand many things of which they are at present ignorant.”

“Bah, bah, bah!” exclaimed the lawyer, drawing circles in the air with his hand to dispel the ideas suggested. “To be a good farmer no great amount of

rhetoric is needed. Dreams, illusions, fancies! Eh, will you take a piece of advice?”

He arose and placed his hand affectionately on the youth’s shoulder, as he continued: “I’m going to give you one, and a very good one, because I see that you are intelligent and the advice will not be wasted. You’re going to study medicine? Well, confine yourself to learning how to put on plasters and apply leeches, and don’t ever try to improve or impair the condition of your kind. When you become a licentiate, marry a rich and devout girl, try to make cures and charge well, shun everything that has any relation to the general state of the country, attend mass, confession, and communion when the rest do, and you will see afterwards how you will thank me, and I shall see it, if I am still alive. Always remember that charity begins at home, for man ought not to seek on earth more than the greatest amount of happiness for himself, as Bentham says. If you involve yourself in quixotisms you will have no career, nor will you get married, nor will you ever amount to anything. All will abandon you, your own countrymen will be the first to laugh at your simplicity. Believe me, you will remember me and

see that I am right, when you have gray hairs like myself, gray hairs such as these!”

Here the old lawyer stroked his scanty white hair, as he smiled sadly and shook his head.

“When I have gray hairs like those, sir,” replied Isagani [147]with equal sadness, “and turn my gaze back over my past and see that I have worked only for myself, without having done what I plainly could and should have done for the country that has given me everything, for the citizens that have helped me to live—then, sir, every gray hair will be a thorn, and instead of rejoicing, they will shame me!”

So saying, he took his leave with a profound bow. The lawyer remained motionless in his place, with an amazed look on his face. He listened to the footfalls that gradually died away, then resumed his seat.

“Poor boy!” he murmured, “similar thoughts also crossed my mind once! What more could any one desire than to be able to say: ‘I have done this for the good of the fatherland, I have consecrated my life to the welfare of others!’ A crown of laurel, steeped in aloes, dry leaves that cover thorns and worms! That is not life, that does not get us our daily bread, nor does it bring us honors— the laurel would hardly

serve for a salad, nor produce ease, nor aid us in winning lawsuits, but quite the reverse! Every country has its code of ethics, as it has its climate and its diseases, different from the climate and the diseases of other countries."

After a pause, he added: "Poor boy! If all should think and act as he does, I don't say but that—Poor boy! Poor Florentino!"[148]

The Tribulations of a Chinese

In the evening of that same Saturday, Quiroga, the Chinese, who aspired to the creation of a consulate for his nation, gave a dinner in the rooms over his bazaar, located in the Escolta. His feast was well attended: friars, government employees, soldiers, merchants, all of them his customers, partners or patrons, were to be seen there, for his store supplied the curates and the conventos with all their necessities, he accepted the chits of all the employees, and he had servants who were discreet, prompt, and complaisant. The friars themselves did not disdain to pass whole hours in his store, sometimes in view of the public, sometimes in the chambers with agreeable company.

That night, then, the sala presented a curious aspect, being filled with friars and clerks seated on Vienna chairs, stools of black wood, and marble benches of Cantonese origin, before little square tables, playing cards or conversing among themselves, under the brilliant glare of the gilt chandeliers or the subdued light of the Chinese lanterns, which were brilliantly decorated with long silken tassels. On the walls there was a lamentable medley of landscapes in dim and gaudy colors, painted in Canton or Hongkong,

mingled with tawdry chromos of odalisks, half-nude women, effeminate lithographs of Christ, the deaths of the just and of the sinners—made by Jewish houses in Germany to be sold in the Catholic countries. Nor were there lacking the Chinese prints on red paper representing a man seated, of venerable aspect, with a calm, smiling face, behind whom stood a servant, ugly, horrible, diabolical, threatening, armed with a lance having a wide, [149]keen blade. Among the Indians some call this figure Mohammed, others Santiago,[1] we do not know why, nor do the Chinese themselves give a very clear explanation of this popular pair. The pop of champagne corks, the rattle of glasses, laughter, cigar smoke, and that odor peculiar to a Chinese habitation—a mixture of punk, opium, and dried fruits—completed the collection.

Dressed as a Chinese mandarin in a blue-tasseled cap, Quiroga moved from room to room, stiff and straight, but casting watchful glances here and there as though to assure himself that nothing was being stolen. Yet in spite of this natural distrust, he exchanged handshakes with each guest, greeted some with a smile sagacious and humble, others with a patronizing air, and still others with a certain shrewd

look that seemed to say, “I know! You didn’t come on my account, you came for the dinner!”

And Quiroga was right! That fat gentleman who is now praising him and speaking of the advisability of a Chinese consulate in Manila, intimating that to manage it there could be no one but Quiroga, is the Señor Gonzalez who hides behind the pseudonym *Pitilí*when he attacks Chinese immigration through the columns of the newspapers. That other, an elderly man who closely examines the lamps, pictures, and other furnishings with grimaces and ejaculations of disdain, is Don Timoteo Pelaez, Juanito’s father, a merchant who inveighs against the Chinese competition that is ruining his business. The one over there, that thin, brown individual with a sharp look and a pale smile, is the celebrated originator of the dispute over Mexican pesos, which so troubled one of Quiroga’s protéges: that government clerk is regarded in Manila as very clever. That one farther on, he of the frowning look and unkempt mustache, is a government official who passes for a most meritorious fellow because he has the courage to speak ill of the business in lottery tickets carried on between Quiroga [150]and an exalted dame in Manila society. The fact is that two thirds of

the tickets go to China and the few that are left in Manila are sold at a premium of a half-real. The honorable gentleman entertains the conviction that some day he will draw the first prize, and is in a rage at finding himself confronted with such tricks.

The dinner, meanwhile, was drawing to an end. From the dining-room floated into the sala snatches of toasts, interruptions, bursts and ripples of laughter. The name of Quiroga was often heard mingled with the words “consul,” “equality,” “justice.” The amphitryon himself did not eat European dishes, so he contented himself with drinking a glass of wine with his guests from time to time, promising to dine with those who were not seated at the first table.

Simoun, who was present, having already dined, was in the sala talking with some merchants, who were complaining of business conditions: everything was going wrong, trade was paralyzed, the European exchanges were exorbitantly high. They sought information from the jeweler or insinuated to him a few ideas, with the hope that these would be communicated to the Captain-General. To all the remedies suggested Simoun responded with a sarcastic and unfeeling exclamation about nonsense,

until one of them in exasperation asked him for his opinion.

“My opinion?” he retorted. “Study how other nations prosper, and then do as they do.”

“And why do they prosper, Señor Simoun?”

Simoun replied with a shrug of his shoulders.

“The port works, which weigh so heavily upon commerce, and the port not yet completed!” sighed Don Timoteo Pelaez. “A Penelope’s web, as my son says, that is spun and unspun. The taxes—”

“You complaining!” exclaimed another. “Just as the General has decreed the destruction of houses of light materials![2] And you with a shipment of galvanized iron!”[151]

“Yes,” rejoined Don Timoteo, “but look what that decree cost me! Then, the destruction will not be carried out for a month, not until Lent begins, and other shipments may arrive. I would have wished them destroyed right away, but—Besides, what are the owners of those houses going to buy from me if they are all poor, all equally beggars?”

“You can always buy up their shacks for a trifle.”

“And afterwards have the decree revoked and sell them back at double the price—that’s business!”

Simoun smiled his frigid smile. Seeing Quiroga approach, he left the querulous merchants to greet the future consul, who on catching sight of him lost his satisfied expression and assigned a countenance like those of the merchants, while he bent almost double.

Quiroga respected the jeweler greatly, not only because he knew him to be very wealthy, but also on account of his rumored influence with the Captain-General. It was reported that Simoun favored Quiroga’s ambitions, that he was an advocate for the consulate, and a certain newspaper hostile to the Chinese had alluded to him in many paraphrases, veiled allusions, and suspension points, in the celebrated controversy with another sheet that was favorable to the queued folk. Some prudent persons added with winks and half-uttered words that his Black Eminence was advising the General to avail himself of the Chinese in order to humble the tenacious pride of the natives.

“To hold the people in subjection,” he was reported to have said, “there’s nothing like humiliating them and humbling them in their own eyes.”

To this end an opportunity had soon presented itself. The guilds of mestizos and natives were continually watching one another, venting their bellicose spirits and their activities in jealousy and distrust. At mass one day the gobernadorcillo of the natives was seated on a bench to the right, and, being extremely thin, happened to cross one of his legs over the other, thus adopting a nonchalant[152]attitude, in order to expose his thighs more and display his pretty shoes. The gobernadorcillo of the guild of mestizos, who was seated on the opposite bench, as he had bunions, and could not cross his legs on account of his obesity, spread his legs wide apart to expose a plain waistcoat adorned with a beautiful gold chain set with diamonds. The two cliques comprehended these maneuvers and joined battle. On the following Sunday all the mestizos, even the thinnest, had large paunches and spread their legs wide apart as though on horseback, while the natives placed one leg over the other, even the fattest, there being one cabeza de barangay who turned a somersault. Seeing these movements, the Chinese all adopted their own peculiar attitude, that of sitting as they do in their shops, with one leg drawn back and upward, the other swinging loose. There resulted protests and petitions, the police rushed to arms ready to start a

civil war, the curates rejoiced, the Spaniards were amused and made money out of everybody, until the General settled the quarrel by ordering that every one should sit as the Chinese did, since they were the heaviest contributors, even though they were not the best Catholics. The difficulty for the mestizos and natives then was that their trousers were too tight to permit of their imitating the Chinese. But to make the intention of humiliating them the more evident, the measure was carried out with great pomp and ceremony, the church being surrounded by a troop of cavalry, while all those within were sweating. The matter was carried to the Cortes, but it was repeated that the Chinese, as the ones who paid, should have their way in the religious ceremonies, even though they apostatized and laughed at Christianity immediately after. The natives and the mestizos had to be content, learning thus not to waste time over such fatuity.[3][153]

Quiroga, with his smooth tongue and humble smile, was lavishly and flatteringly attentive to Simoun. His voice was caressing and his bows numerous, but the jeweler cut his blandishments short by asking brusquely:

“Did the bracelets suit her?”

At this question all Quiroga's liveliness vanished like a dream. His caressing voice became plaintive; he bowed lower, gave the Chinese salutation of raising his clasped hands to the height of his face, and groaned: "Ah, Señor Simoun! I'm lost, I'm ruined!"[4]

"How, Quiroga, lost and ruined when you have so many bottles of champagne and so many guests?"

Quiroga closed his eyes and made a grimace. Yes, the affair of that afternoon, that affair of the bracelets, had ruined him. Simoun smiled, for when a Chinese merchant complains it is because all is going well, and when he makes a show that things are booming it is quite certain that he is planning an assignment or flight to his own country.

"You didn't know that I'm lost, I'm ruined? Ah, Señor Simoun, I'm *busted!*" To make his condition [154]plainer, he illustrated the word by making a movement as though he were falling in collapse.

Simoun wanted to laugh, but restrained himself and said that he knew nothing, nothing at all, as Quiroga led him to a room and closed the door. He then explained the cause of his misfortune.

Three diamond bracelets that he had secured from Simoun on pretense of showing them to his wife were not for her, a poor native shut up in her room like a Chinese woman, but for a beautiful and charming lady, the friend of a powerful man, whose influence was needed by him in a certain deal in which he could clear some six thousand pesos. As he did not understand feminine tastes and wished to be gallant, the Chinese had asked for the three finest bracelets the jeweler had, each priced at three to four thousand pesos. With affected simplicity and his most caressing smile, Quiroga had begged the lady to select the one she liked best, and the lady, more simple and caressing still, had declared that she liked all three, and had kept them.

Simoun burst out into laughter.

“Ah, sir, I’m lost, I’m ruined!” cried the Chinese, slapping himself lightly with his delicate hands; but the jeweler continued his laughter.

“Ugh, bad people, surely not a real lady,” went on the Chinaman, shaking his head in disgust. “What! She has no decency, while me, a Chinaman, me always polite! Ah, surely she not a real lady—a *cigarrera* has more decency!”

“They’ve caught you, they’ve caught you!” exclaimed Simoun, poking him in the chest.

“And everybody’s asking for loans and never pays—what about that? Clerks, officials, lieutenants, soldiers—” he checked them off on his long-nailed fingers—“ah, Señor Simoun, I’m lost, I’m *busted*!”

“Get out with your complaints,” said Simoun. “I’ve saved you from many officials that wanted money from you. I’ve lent it to them so that they wouldn’t bother you, even when I knew that they couldn’t pay.”[155]

“But, Señor Simoun, you lend to officials; I lend to women, sailors, everybody.”

“I bet you get your money back.”

“Me, money back? Ah, surely you don’t understand! When it’s lost in gambling they never pay. Besides, you have a consul, you can force them, but I haven’t.”

Simoun became thoughtful. “Listen, Quiroga,” he said, somewhat abstractedly, “I’ll undertake to collect what the officers and sailors owe you. Give me their notes.”

Quiroga again fell to whining: they had never given him any notes.

“When they come to you asking for money, send them to me. I want to help you.”

The grateful Quiroga thanked him, but soon fell to lamenting again about the bracelets. “A *cigarrera* wouldn’t be so shameless!” he repeated.

“The devil!” exclaimed Simoun, looking askance at the Chinese, as though studying him. “Exactly when I need the money and thought that you could pay me! But it can all be arranged, as I don’t want you to fail for such a small amount. Come, a favor, and I’ll reduce to seven the nine thousand pesos you owe me. You can get anything you wish through the Customs —boxes of lamps, iron, copper, glassware, Mexican pesos—you furnish arms to the conventos, don’t you?”

The Chinese nodded affirmation, but remarked that he had to do a good deal of bribing. “I furnish the padres everything!”

“Well, then,” added Simoun in a low voice, “I need you to get in for me some boxes of rifles that arrived this evening. I want you to keep them in your

warehouse; there isn’t room for all of them in my house.”

Quiroga began to show symptoms of fright.

“Don’t get scared, you don’t run any risk. These rifles are to be concealed, a few at a time, in various dwellings, then a search will be instituted, and many people will be [156]sent to prison. You and I can make a haul getting them set free. Understand me?”

Quiroga wavered, for he was afraid of firearms. In his desk he had an empty revolver that he never touched without turning his head away and closing his eyes.

“If you can’t do it, I’ll have to apply to some one else, but then I’ll need the nine thousand pesos to cross their palms and shut their eyes.”

“All right, all right!” Quiroga finally agreed. “But many people will be arrested? There’ll be a search, eh?”

When Quiroga and Simoun returned to the sala they found there, in animated conversation, those who had finished their dinner, for the champagne had loosened their tongues and stirred their brains. They were talking rather freely.

In a group where there were a number of government clerks, some ladies, and Don Custodio, the topic was a commission sent to India to make certain investigations about footwear for the soldiers.

“Who compose it?” asked an elderly lady.

“A colonel, two other officers, and his Excellency’s nephew.”

“Four?” rejoined a clerk. “What a commission! Suppose they disagree—are they competent?”

“That’s what I asked,” replied a clerk. “It’s said that one civilian ought to go, one who has no military prejudices—a shoemaker, for instance.”

“That’s right,” added an importer of shoes, “but it wouldn’t do to send an Indian or a Chinaman, and the only Peninsular shoemaker demanded such large fees —”

“But why do they have to make any investigations about footwear?” inquired the elderly lady. “It isn’t for the Peninsular artillerymen. The Indian soldiers can go barefoot, as they do in their towns.”[5][157]

“Exactly so, and the treasury would save more,” corroborated another lady, a widow who was not satisfied with her pension.

“But you must remember,” remarked another in the group, a friend of the officers on the commission, “that while it’s true they go barefoot in the towns, it’s not the same as moving about under orders in the service. They can’t choose the hour, nor the road, nor rest when they wish. Remember, madam, that, with the noonday sun overhead and the earth below baking like an oven, they have to march over sandy stretches, where there are stones, the sun above and fire below, bullets in front—”

“It’s only a question of getting used to it!”

“Like the donkey that got used to not eating! In our present campaign the greater part of our losses have been due to wounds on the soles of the feet. Remember the donkey, madam, remember the donkey!”

“But, my dear sir,” retorted the lady, “look how much money is wasted on shoe-leather. There’s enough to pension many widows and orphans in order to maintain our prestige. Don’t smile, for I’m not talking about myself, and I have my pension, even though a very small one, insignificant considering the services my husband rendered, but I’m talking of others who are dragging out miserable lives! It’s not

right that after so much persuasion to come and so many hardships in crossing the sea they should end here by dying of hunger. What you say about the soldiers may be true, but the fact is that I've been in the country more than three years, and I haven't seen any soldier limping."

"In that I agree with the lady," said her neighbor. "Why issue them shoes when they were born without them?"

"And why shirts?"

"And why trousers?"

"Just calculate what we should economize on soldiers clothed only in their skins!" concluded he who was defending the army.[158]

In another group the conversation was more heated. Ben-Zayb was talking and declaiming, while Padre Camorra, as usual, was constantly interrupting him. The friar-journalist, in spite of his respect for the cowled gentry, was always at loggerheads with Padre Camorra, whom he regarded as a silly half-friar, thus giving himself the appearance of being independent and refuting the accusations of those who called him Fray Ibañez. Padre Camorra liked his adversary, as the latter was the only person who would take

seriously what he styled his arguments. They were discussing magnetism, spiritualism, magic, and the like. Their words flew through the air like the knives and balls of jugglers, tossed back and forth from one to the other.

That year great attention had been attracted in the Quiapo fair by a head, wrongly called a sphinx, exhibited by Mr. Leeds, an American. Glaring advertisements covered the walls of the houses, mysterious and funereal, to excite the curiosity of the public. Neither Ben-Zayb nor any of the padres had yet seen it; Juanito Pelaez was the only one who had, and he was describing his wonderment to the party.

Ben-Zayb, as a journalist, looked for a natural explanation. Padre Camorra talked of the devil, Padre Irene smiled, Padre Salvi remained grave.

“But, Padre, the devil doesn’t need to come—we are sufficient to damn ourselves—”

“It can’t be explained any other way.”

“If science—”

“Get out with science, *puñales*!”

“But, listen to me and I’ll convince you. It’s all a question of optics. I haven’t yet seen the head nor do

I know how it looks, but this gentleman”—indicating Juanito Pelaez—“tells us that it does not look like the talking heads that are usually exhibited. So be it! But the principle is the same—it’s all a question of optics. Wait! A mirror is placed thus, another mirror behind it, [159]the image is reflected—I say, it is purely a problem in physics.”

Taking down from the walls several mirrors, he arranged them, turned them round and round, but, not getting the desired result, concluded: “As I say, it’s nothing more or less than a question of optics.”

“But what do you want mirrors for, if Juanito tells us that the head is inside a box placed on the table? I see in it spiritualism, because the spiritualists always make use of tables, and I think that Padre Salvi, as the ecclesiastical governor, ought to prohibit the exhibition.”

Padre Salvi remained silent, saying neither yes nor no.

“In order to learn if there are devils or mirrors inside it,” suggested Simoun, “the best thing would be for you to go and see the famous sphinx.”

The proposal was a good one, so it was accepted, although Padre Salvi and Don Custodio showed some

repugnance. They at a fair, to rub shoulders with the public, to see sphinxes and talking heads! What would the natives say? These might take them for mere men, endowed with the same passions and weaknesses as others. But Ben-Zayb, with his journalistic ingenuity, promised to request Mr. Leeds not to admit the public while they were inside. They would be honoring him sufficiently by the visit not to admit of his refusal, and besides he would not charge any admission fee. To give a show of probability to this, he concluded: “Because, remember, if I should expose the trick of the mirrors to the public, it would ruin the poor American’s business.” Ben-Zayb was a conscientious individual.

About a dozen set out, among them our acquaintances, Padres Salvi, Camorra, and Irene, Don Custodio, Ben-Zayb, and Juanito Pelaez. Their carriages set them down at the entrance to the Quiapo Plaza.[160]

[1] The patron saint of Spain, St. James.—Tr.

[2] Houses of bamboo and nipa, such as form the homes of the masses of the natives.—Tr.

[3] “In this paragraph Rizal alludes to an incident that had very serious results. There was annually celebrated in Binondo a certain religious festival, principally at the expense of the Chinese mestizos. The latter finally petitioned that their gobernadorcillo be given the presidency [153n]of it, and this was granted, thanks to the fact that the parish priest (the Dominican, Fray José Hevia Campomanes) held to the opinion that the presidency belonged to those who paid the most. The Tagalogs protested, alleging their better right to it, as the genuine sons of the country, not to mention the historical

precedent, but the friar, who was looking after his own interests, did not yield. General Terrero (Governor, 1885–1888), at the advice of his liberal councilors, finally had the parish priest removed and for the time being decided the affair in favor of the Tagalogs. The matter reached the Colonial Office (*Ministerio de Ultramar*) and the Minister was not even content merely to settle it in the way the friars desired, but made amends to Padre Hevia by appointing him a bishop."—*W. E. Retana, who was a journalist in Manila at the time, in a note to this chapter.*

Childish and ridiculous as this may appear now, it was far from being so at the time, especially in view of the supreme contempt with which the pugnacious Tagalog looks down upon the meek and complaisant Chinese and the mortal antipathy that exists between the two races.—Tr.

[4] It is regrettable that Quiroga's picturesque butchery of Spanish and Tagalog—the dialect of the Manila Chinese—cannot be reproduced here. Only the thought can be given. There is the same difficulty with *r's, d's*, and *l's* that the Chinese show in English.—Tr.

[5] Up to the outbreak of the insurrection in 1896, the only genuinely Spanish troops in the islands were a few hundred artillerymen, the rest being natives, with Spanish officers.—Tr.

The Quiapo Fair

It was a beautiful night and the plaza presented a most animated aspect. Taking advantage of the freshness of the breeze and the splendor of the January moon, the people filled the fair to see, be seen, and amuse themselves. The music of the cosmoramas and the lights of the lanterns gave life and merriment to every one. Long rows of booths, brilliant with tinsel and gauds, exposed to view clusters of balls, masks strung by the eyes, tin toys, trains, carts, mechanical horses, carriages, steam-engines with diminutive boilers, Lilliputian tableware of porcelain, pine Nativities, dolls both foreign and domestic, the former red and smiling, the latter sad and pensive like little ladies beside gigantic children. The beating of drums, the roar of tin horns, the wheezy music of the accordions and the hand-organs, all mingled in a carnival concert, amid the coming and going of the crowd, pushing, stumbling over one another, with their faces turned toward the booths, so that the collisions were frequent and often amusing. The carriages were forced to move slowly, with the *tabí* of the cocheros repeated every moment. Met and mingled government clerks, soldiers, friars,

students, Chinese, girls with their mammas or aunts, all greeting, signaling, calling to one another merrily.

Padre Camorra was in the seventh heaven at the sight of so many pretty girls. He stopped, looked back, nudged Ben-Zayb, chuckled and swore, saying, “And that one, and that one, my ink-slinger? And that one over there, what say you?” In his contentment he even fell to using the familiar *tu* toward his friend and adversary. Padre [161]Salvi stared at him from time to time, but he took little note of Padre Salvi. On the contrary, he pretended to stumble so that he might brush against the girls, he winked and made eyes at them.

“*Puñales!*” he kept saying to himself. “When shall I be the curate of Quiapo?”

Suddenly Ben-Zayb let go an oath, jumped aside, and slapped his hand on his arm; Padre Camorra in his excess of enthusiasm had pinched him. They were approaching a dazzling señorita who was attracting the attention of the whole plaza, and Padre Camorra, unable to restrain his delight, had taken Ben-Zayb’s arm as a substitute for the girl’s.

It was Paulita Gomez, the prettiest of the pretty, in company with Isagani, followed by Doña Victorina.

The young woman was resplendent in her beauty: all stopped and craned their necks, while they ceased their conversation and followed her with their eyes—even Doña Victorina was respectfully saluted.

Paulita was arrayed in a rich camisa and pañuelo of embroidered piña, different from those she had worn that morning to the church. The gauzy texture of the piña set off her shapely head, and the Indians who saw her compared her to the moon surrounded by fleecy clouds. A silk rose-colored skirt, caught up in rich and graceful folds by her little hand, gave majesty to her erect figure, the movement of which, harmonizing with her curving neck, displayed all the triumphs of vanity and satisfied coquetry. Isagani appeared to be rather disgusted, for so many curious eyes fixed upon the beauty of his sweetheart annoyed him. The stares seemed to him robbery and the girl's smiles faithlessness.

Juanito saw her and his hump increased when he spoke to her. Paulita replied negligently, while Doña Victorina called to him, for Juanito was her favorite, she preferring him to Isagani.

"What a girl, what a girl!" muttered the entranced Padre Camorra.[162]

“Come, Padre, pinch yourself and let me alone,” said Ben-Zayb fretfully.

“What a girl, what a girl!” repeated the friar. “And she has for a sweetheart a pupil of mine, the boy I had the quarrel with.”

“Just my luck that she’s not of my town,” he added, after turning his head several times to follow her with his looks. He was even tempted to leave his companions to follow the girl, and Ben-Zayb had difficulty in dissuading him. Paulita’s beautiful figure moved on, her graceful little head nodding with inborn coquetry.

Our promenaders kept on their way, not without sighs on the part of the friar-artilleryman, until they reached a booth surrounded by sightseers, who quickly made way for them. It was a shop of little wooden figures, of local manufacture, representing in all shapes and sizes the costumes, races, and occupations of the country: Indians, Spaniards, Chinese, mestizos, friars, clergymen, government clerks, gobernadorcillos, students, soldiers, and so on.

Whether the artists had more affection for the priests, the folds of whose habits were better suited to their

esthetic purposes, or whether the friars, holding such an important place in Philippine life, engaged the attention of the sculptor more, the fact was that, for one cause or another, images of them abounded, well-turned and finished, representing them in the sublimest moments of their lives—the opposite of what is done in Europe, where they are pictured as sleeping on casks of wine, playing cards, emptying tankards, rousing themselves to gaiety, or patting the cheeks of a buxom girl. No, the friars of the Philippines were different: elegant, handsome, well-dressed, their tonsures neatly shaven, their features symmetrical and serene, their gaze meditative, their expression saintly, somewhat rosy-cheeked, cane in hand and patent-leather shoes on their feet, inviting adoration and a place in a glass case. Instead of the symbols of gluttony and incontinence of their brethren in [163]Europe, those of Manila carried the book, the crucifix, and the palm of martyrdom; instead of kissing the simple country lasses, those of Manila gravely extended the hand to be kissed by children and grown men doubled over almost to kneeling; instead of the full refectory and dining-hall, their stage in Europe, in Manila they had the oratory, the study-table; instead of the mendicant friar who goes from door to door with his donkey and sack,

begging alms, the friars of the Philippines scattered gold from full hands among the miserable Indians.

“Look, here’s Padre Camorra!” exclaimed Ben-Zayb, upon whom the effect of the champagne still lingered. He pointed to a picture of a lean friar of thoughtful mien who was seated at a table with his head resting on the palm of his hand, apparently writing a sermon by the light of a lamp. The contrast suggested drew laughter from the crowd.

Padre Camorra, who had already forgotten about Paulita, saw what was meant and laughing his clownish laugh, asked in turn, “Whom does this other figure resemble, Ben-Zayb?”

It was an old woman with one eye, with disheveled hair, seated on the ground like an Indian idol, ironing clothes. The sad-iron was carefully imitated, being of copper with coals of red tinsel and smoke-wreaths of dirty twisted cotton.

“Eh, Ben-Zayb, it wasn’t a fool who designed that” asked Padre Camorra with a laugh.

“Well, I don’t see the point,” replied the journalist.

“But, *puñales*, don’t you see the title, *The Philippine Press*? That utensil with which the old woman is

ironing is here called the press!”

All laughed at this, Ben-Zayb himself joining in good-naturedly.

Two soldiers of the Civil Guard, appropriately labeled, were placed behind a man who was tightly bound and had his face covered by his hat. It was entitled *The Country of* [164]*Abaka*,[1] and from appearances they were going to shoot him.

Many of our visitors were displeased with the exhibition. They talked of rules of art, they sought proportion—one said that this figure did not have seven heads, that the face lacked a nose, having only three, all of which made Padre Camorra somewhat thoughtful, for he did not comprehend how a figure, to be correct, need have four noses and seven heads. Others said, if they were muscular, that they could not be Indians; still others remarked that it was not sculpture, but mere carpentry. Each added his spoonful of criticism, until Padre Camorra, not to be outdone, ventured to ask for at least thirty legs for each doll, because, if the others wanted noses, couldn’t he require feet? So they fell to discussing whether the Indian had or had not any aptitude for sculpture, and whether it would be advisable to

encourage that art, until there arose a general dispute, which was cut short by Don Custodio's declaration that the Indians had the aptitude, but that they should devote themselves exclusively to the manufacture of saints.

"One would say," observed Ben-Zayb, who was full of bright ideas that night, "that this Chinaman is Quiroga, but on close examination it looks like Padre Irene. And what do you say about that British Indian? He looks like Simoun!"

Fresh peals of laughter resounded, while Padre Irene rubbed his nose.

"That's right!"

"It's the very image of him!"

"But where is Simoun? Simoun should buy it."

But the jeweler had disappeared, unnoticed by any one.

"*Puñales!*" exclaimed Padre Camorra, "how stingy the American is! He's afraid we would make him pay the admission for all of us into Mr. Leeds' show."[165]

"No!" rejoined Ben-Zayb, "what he's afraid of is that he'll compromise himself. He may have foreseen the

joke in store for his friend Mr. Leeds and has got out of the way."

Thus, without purchasing the least trifle, they continued on their way to see the famous sphinx. Ben-Zayb offered to manage the affair, for the American would not rebuff a journalist who could take revenge in an unfavorable article. "You'll see that it's all a question of mirrors," he said, "because, you see—" Again he plunged into a long demonstration, and as he had no mirrors at hand to discredit his theory he tangled himself up in all kinds of blunders and wound up by not knowing himself what he was saying. "In short, you'll see how it's all a question of optics."[166]

[1] Abaka is the fiber obtained from the leaves of the *Musa textilis* and is known commercially as Manila hemp. As it is exclusively a product of the Philippines, it may be taken here to symbolize the country.—Tr.

Legerdemain

Mr. Leeds, a genuine Yankee, dressed completely in black, received his visitors with great deference. He spoke Spanish well, from having been for many years in South America, and offered no objection to their request, saying that they might examine everything, both before and after the exhibition, but begged that they remain quiet while it was in progress. Ben-Zayb smiled in pleasant anticipation of the vexation he had prepared for the American.

The room, hung entirely in black, was lighted by ancient lamps burning alcohol. A rail wrapped in black velvet divided it into two almost equal parts, one of which was filled with seats for the spectators and the other occupied by a platform covered with a checkered carpet. In the center of this platform was placed a table, over which was spread a piece of black cloth adorned with skulls and cabalistic signs. The *mise en scène* was therefore lugubrious and had its effect upon the merry visitors. The jokes died away, they spoke in whispers, and however much some tried to appear indifferent, their lips framed no smiles. All felt as if they had entered a house where there was a corpse, an illusion accentuated by an odor of wax and incense. Don Custodio and Padre Salvi

consulted in whispers over the expediency of prohibiting such shows.

Ben-Zayb, in order to cheer the dispirited group and embarrass Mr. Leeds, said to him in a familiar tone: “Eh, Mister, since there are none but ourselves here and we aren’t Indians who can be fooled, won’t you let us see [167]the trick? We know of course that it’s purely a question of optics, but as Padre Camorra won’t be convinced—”

Here he started to jump over the rail, instead of going through the proper opening, while Padre Camorra broke out into protests, fearing that Ben-Zayb might be right.

“And why not, sir?” rejoined the American. “But don’t break anything, will you?”

The journalist was already on the platform. “You will allow me, then?” he asked, and without waiting for the permission, fearing that it might not be granted, raised the cloth to look for the mirrors that he expected should be between the legs of the table. Ben-Zayb uttered an exclamation and stepped back, again placed both hands under the table and waved them about; he encountered only empty space. The table had three thin iron legs, sunk into the floor.

The journalist looked all about as though seeking something.

“Where are the mirrors?” asked Padre Camorra.

Ben-Zayb looked and looked, felt the table with his fingers, raised the cloth again, and rubbed his hand over his forehead from time to time, as if trying to remember something.

“Have you lost anything?” inquired Mr. Leeds.

“The mirrors, Mister, where are the mirrors?”

“I don’t know where yours are—mine are at the hotel. Do you want to look at yourself? You’re somewhat pale and excited.”

Many laughed, in spite of their weird impressions, on seeing the jesting coolness of the American, while Ben-Zayb retired, quite abashed, to his seat, muttering, “It can’t be. You’ll see that he doesn’t do it without mirrors. The table will have to be changed later.”

Mr. Leeds placed the cloth on the table again and turning toward his illustrious audience, asked them, “Are you satisfied? May we begin?”

“Hurry up! How cold-blooded he is!” said the widow.

“Then, ladies and gentlemen, take your seats and get your questions ready.”

Mr. Leeds disappeared through a doorway and in a few moments returned with a black box of worm-eaten wood, covered with inscriptions in the form of birds, beasts, and human heads.

“Ladies and gentlemen,” he began solemnly, “once having had occasion to visit the great pyramid of Khufu, a Pharaoh of the fourth dynasty, I chanced upon a sarcophagus of red granite in a forgotten chamber. My joy was great, for I thought that I had found a royal mummy, but what was my disappointment on opening the coffin, at the cost of infinite labor, to find nothing more than this box, which you may examine.”

He handed the box to those in the front row. Padre Camorra drew back in loathing, Padre Salvi looked at it closely as if he enjoyed sepulchral things, Padre Irene smiled a knowing smile, Don Custodio affected gravity and disdain, while Ben-Zayb hunted for his mirrors—there they must be, for it was a question of mirrors.

“It smells like a corpse,” observed one lady, fanning herself furiously. “Ugh!”

“It smells of forty centuries,” remarked some one with emphasis.

Ben-Zayb forgot about his mirrors to discover who had made this remark. It was a military official who had read the history of Napoleon.

Ben-Zayb felt jealous and to utter another epigram that might annoy Padre Camorra a little said, “It smells of the Church.”

“This box, ladies and gentlemen,” continued the American, “contained a handful of ashes and a piece of papyrus on which were written some words. Examine them yourselves, but I beg of you not to breathe heavily, because if any of the dust is lost my sphinx will appear in a mutilated condition.”

The humbug, described with such seriousness and conviction, [169]was gradually having its effect, so much so that when the box was passed around, no one dared to breathe. Padre Camorra, who had so often depicted from the pulpit of Tiani the torments and sufferings of hell, while he laughed in his sleeves at the terrified looks of the sinners, held his nose, and Padre Salvi—the same Padre Salvi who had on All Souls’ Day prepared a phantasmagoria of the souls in purgatory with flames and transparencies illuminated

with alcohol lamps and covered with tinsel, on the high altar of the church in a suburb, in order to get alms and orders for masses—the lean and taciturn Padre Salvi held his breath and gazed suspiciously at that handful of ashes.

"*Memento, homo, quia pulvis es*!" muttered Padre Irene with a smile.

"Pish!" sneered Ben-Zayb—the same thought had occurred to him, and the Canon had taken the words out of his mouth.

"Not knowing what to do," resumed Mr. Leeds, closing the box carefully, "I examined the papyrus and discovered two words whose meaning was unknown to me. I deciphered them, and tried to pronounce them aloud. Scarcely had I uttered the first word when I felt the box slipping from my hands, as if pressed down by an enormous weight, and it glided along the floor, whence I vainly endeavored to remove it. But my surprise was converted into terror when it opened and I found within a human head that stared at me fixedly. Paralyzed with fright and uncertain what to do in the presence of such a phenomenon, I remained for a time stupefied, trembling like a person poisoned with mercury, but

after a while recovered myself and, thinking that it was a vain illusion, tried to divert my attention by reading the second word. Hardly had I pronounced it when the box closed, the head disappeared, and in its place I again found the handful of ashes. Without suspecting it I had discovered the two most potent words in nature, the words of creation and destruction, of life and of death!”[170]

He paused for a few moments to note the effect of his story, then with grave and measured steps approached the table and placed the mysterious box upon it.

“The cloth, Mister!” exclaimed the incorrigible Ben-Zayb.

“Why not?” rejoined Mr. Leeds, very complaisantly.

Lifting the box with his right hand, he caught up the cloth with his left, completely exposing the table sustained by its three legs. Again he placed the box upon the center and with great gravity turned to his audience.

“Here’s what I want to see,” said Ben-Zayb to his neighbor. “You notice how he makes some excuse.”

Great attention was depicted on all countenances and silence reigned. The noise and roar of the street could

be distinctly heard, but all were so affected that a snatch of dialogue which reached them produced no effect.

“Why can’t we go in?” asked a woman’s voice.

“*Abá*, there’s a lot of friars and clerks in there,” answered a man. “The sphinx is for them only.”

“The friars are inquisitive too,” said the woman’s voice, drawing away. “They don’t want us to know how they’re being fooled. Why, is the head a friar’s *querida*?”

In the midst of a profound silence the American announced in a tone of emotion: “Ladies and gentlemen, with a word I am now going to reanimate the handful of ashes, and you will talk with a being that knows the past, the present, and much of the future!”

Here the prestidigitator uttered a soft cry, first mournful, then lively, a medley of sharp sounds like imprecations and hoarse notes like threats, which made Ben-Zayb’s hair stand on end.

“*Deremof*!” cried the American.

The curtains on the wall rustled, the lamps burned low, the table creaked. A feeble groan responded

from the interior of the box. Pale and uneasy, all stared at one another, while one terrified señora caught hold of Padre Salvi.[171]

The box then opened of its own accord and presented to the eyes of the audience a head of cadaverous aspect, surrounded by long and abundant black hair. It slowly opened its eyes and looked around the whole audience. Those eyes had a vivid radiance, accentuated by their cavernous sockets, and, as if deep were calling unto deep, fixed themselves upon the profound, sunken eyes of the trembling Padre Salvi, who was staring unnaturally, as though he saw a ghost.

“Sphinx,” commanded Mr. Leeds, “tell the audience who you are.”

A deep silence prevailed, while a chill wind blew through the room and made the blue flames of the sepulchral lamps flicker. The most skeptical shivered.

“I am Imuthis,” declared the head in a funereal, but strangely menacing, voice. “I was born in the time of Amasis and died under the Persian domination, when Cambyses was returning from his disastrous expedition into the interior of Libya. I had come to complete my education after extensive travels

through Greece, Assyria, and Persia, and had returned to my native laud to dwell in it until Thoth should call me before his terrible tribunal. But to my undoing, on passing through Babylonia, I discovered an awful secret—the secret of the false Smerdis who usurped the throne, the bold Magian Gaumata who governed as an impostor. Fearing that I would betray him to Cambyses, he determined upon my ruin through the instrumentality of the Egyptian priests, who at that time ruled my native country. They were the owners of two-thirds of the land, the monopolizers of learning, they held the people down in ignorance and tyranny, they brutalized them, thus making them fit to pass without resistance from one domination to another. The invaders availed themselves of them, and knowing their usefulness, protected and enriched them. The rulers not only depended on their will, but some were reduced to mere instruments of theirs. The Egyptian priests hastened to execute Gaumata's orders, with greater [172]zeal from their fear of me, because they were afraid that I would reveal their impostures to the people. To accomplish their purpose, they made use of a young priest of Abydos, who passed for a saint."

A painful silence followed these words. That head was talking of priestly intrigues and impostures, and although referring to another age and other creeds, all the friars present were annoyed, possibly because they could see in the general trend of the speech some analogy to the existing situation. Padre Salvi was in the grip of convulsive shivering; he worked his lips and with bulging eyes followed the gaze of the head as though fascinated. Beads of sweat began to break out on his emaciated face, but no one noticed this, so deeply absorbed and affected were they.

“What was the plot concocted by the priests of your country against you?” asked Mr. Leeds.

The head uttered a sorrowful groan, which seemed to come from the bottom of the heart, and the spectators saw its eyes, those fiery eyes, clouded and filled with tears. Many shuddered and felt their hair rise. No, that was not an illusion, it was not a trick: the head was the victim and what it told was its own story.

“Ay!” it moaned, shaking with affliction, “I loved a maiden, the daughter of a priest, pure as light, like the freshly opened lotus! The young priest of Abydos also desired her and planned a rebellion, using my

name and some papyri that he had secured from my beloved. The rebellion broke out at the time when Cambyses was returning in rage over the disasters of his unfortunate campaign. I was accused of being a rebel, was made a prisoner, and having effected my escape was killed in the chase on Lake Moeris. From out of eternity I saw the imposture triumph. I saw the priest of Abydos night and day persecuting the maiden, who had taken refuge in a temple of Isis on the island of Philae. I saw him persecute and harass her, even in the subterranean chambers, I saw him drive her mad with terror and suffering, like a huge bat pursuing a white dove. [173]Ah, priest, priest of Abydos, I have returned to life to expose your infamy, and after so many years of silence, I name thee murderer, hypocrite, liar!”

A dry, hollow laugh accompanied these words, while a choked voice responded, “No! Mercy!”

It was Padre Salvi, who had been overcome with terror and with arms extended was slipping in collapse to the floor.

“What’s the matter with your Reverence? Are you ill?” asked Padre Irene.

“The heat of the room—”

“This odor of corpses we’re breathing here—”

“Murderer, slanderer, hypocrite!” repeated the head. “I accuse you—murderer, murderer, murderer!”

Again the dry laugh, sepulchral and menacing, resounded, as though that head were so absorbed in contemplation of its wrongs that it did not see the tumult that prevailed in the room.

“Mercy! She still lives!” groaned Padre Salvi, and then lost consciousness. He was as pallid as a corpse. Some of the ladies thought it their duty to faint also, and proceeded to do so.

“He is out of his head! Padre Salvi!”

“I told him not to eat that bird’s-nest soup,” said Padre Irene. “It has made him sick.”

“But he didn’t eat anything,” rejoined Don Custodio shivering. “As the head has been staring at him fixedly, it has mesmerized him.”

So disorder prevailed, the room seemed to be a hospital or a battlefield. Padre Salvi looked like a corpse, and the ladies, seeing that no one was paying them any attention, made the best of it by recovering.

Meanwhile, the head had been reduced to ashes, and Mr. Leeds, having replaced the cloth on the table, bowed his audience out.

“This show must be prohibited,” said Don Custodio on leaving. “It’s wicked and highly immoral.”[174]

“And above all, because it doesn’t use mirrors,” added Ben-Zayb, who before going out of the room tried to assure himself finally, so he leaped over the rail, went up to the table, and raised the cloth: nothing, absolutely nothing![1] On the following day he wrote an article in which he spoke of occult sciences, spiritualism, and the like.

An order came immediately from the ecclesiastical governor prohibiting the show, but Mr. Leeds had already disappeared, carrying his secret with him to Hongkong.[175]

[1] Yet Ben-Zayb was not very much mistaken. The three legs of the table have grooves in them in which slide the mirrors hidden below the platform and covered by the squares of the carpet. By placing the box upon the table a spring is pressed and the mirrors rise gently. The cloth is then removed, with care to raise it instead of letting it slide off, and then there is the ordinary table of the talking heads. The table is connected with the bottom of the box. The exhibition ended, the prestidigitator again covers the table, presses another spring, and the mirrors descend.—*Author’s note.*

The Fuse

Placido Penitente left the class with his heart overflowing with bitterness and sullen gloom in his looks. He was worthy of his name when not driven from his usual course, but once irritated he was a veritable torrent, a wild beast that could only be stopped by the death of himself or his foe. So many affronts, so many pinpricks, day after day, had made his heart quiver, lodging in it to sleep the sleep of lethargic vipers, and they now were awaking to shake and hiss with fury. The hisses resounded in his ears with the jesting epithets of the professor, the phrases in the slang of the markets, and he seemed to hear blows and laughter. A thousand schemes for revenge rushed into his brain, crowding one another, only to fade immediately like phantoms in a dream. His vanity cried out to him with desperate tenacity that he must do something.

“Placido Penitente,” said the voice, “show these youths that you have dignity, that you are the son of a valiant and noble province, where wrongs are washed out with blood. You’re a Batangan, Placido Penitente! Avenge yourself, Placido Penitente!”

The youth groaned and gnashed his teeth, stumbling against every one in the street and on the Bridge of Spain, as if he were seeking a quarrel. In the latter place he saw a carriage in which was the Vice-Rector, Padre Sibyla, accompanied by Don Custodio, and he had a great mind to seize the friar and throw him into the river.

He proceeded along the Escolta and was tempted to assault two Augustinians who were seated in the doorway [176]of Quiroga's bazaar, laughing and joking with other friars who must have been inside in joyous conversation, for their merry voices and sonorous laughter could be heard. Somewhat farther on, two cadets blocked up the sidewalk, talking with the clerk of a warehouse, who was in his shirtsleeves. Penitents moved toward them to force a passage and they, perceiving his dark intention, good-humoredly made way for him. Placido was by this time under the influence of the *amok*, as the Malayists say.

As he approached his home—the house of a silversmith where he lived as a boarder—he tried to collect his thoughts and make a plan—to return to his town and avenge himself by showing the friars that they could not with impunity insult a youth or make a joke of him. He decided to write a letter immediately

to his mother, Cabesang Andang, to inform her of what had happened and to tell her that the schoolroom had closed forever for him. Although there was the Ateneo of the Jesuits, where he might study that year, yet it was not very likely that the Dominicans would grant him the transfer, and, even though he should secure it, in the following year he would have to return to the University.

“They say that we don’t know how to avenge ourselves!” he muttered. “Let the lightning strike and we’ll see!”

But Placido was not reckoning upon what awaited him in the house of the silversmith. Cabesang Andang had just arrived from Batangas, having come to do some shopping, to visit her son, and to bring him money, jerked venison, and silk handkerchiefs.

The first greetings over, the poor woman, who had at once noticed her son’s gloomy look, could no longer restrain her curiosity and began to ask questions. His first explanations Cabesang Andang regarded as some subterfuge, so she smiled and soothed her son, reminding him of their sacrifices and privations. She spoke of Capitana Simona’s son, who, having entered the seminary, now carried himself in the town like a

bishop, and Capitana Simona already [177]considered herself a Mother of God, clearly so, for her son was going to be another Christ.

“If the son becomes a priest,” said she, “the mother won’t have to pay us what she owes us. Who will collect from her then?”

But on seeing that Placido was speaking seriously and reading in his eyes the storm that raged within him, she realized that what he was telling her was unfortunately the strict truth. She remained silent for a while and then broke out into lamentations.

“Ay!” she exclaimed. “I promised your father that I would care for you, educate you, and make a lawyer of you! I’ve deprived myself of everything so that you might go to school! Instead of joining the *panguingui* where the stake is a half peso, I Ve gone only where it’s a half real, enduring the bad smells and the dirty cards. Look at my patched camisa; for instead of buying new ones I’ve spent the money in masses and presents to St. Sebastian, even though I don’t have great confidence in his power, because the curate recites the masses fast and hurriedly, he’s an entirely new saint and doesn’t yet know how to perform miracles, and isn’t made

of *batikulin* but of*lanete*. Ay, what will your father say to me when I die and see him again!”

So the poor woman lamented and wept, while Placido became gloomier and let stifled sighs escape from his breast.

“What would I get out of being a lawyer?” was his response.

“What will become of you?” asked his mother, clasping her hands. “They’ll call you a filibuster and garrote you. I’ve told you that you must have patience, that you must be humble. I don’t tell you that you must kiss the hands of the curates, for I know that you have a delicate sense of smell, like your father, who couldn’t endure European cheese.[1] But we have to suffer, to be silent, to say yes [178]to everything. What are we going to do? The friars own everything, and if they are unwilling, no one will become a lawyer or a doctor. Have patience, my son, have patience!”

“But I’ve had a great deal, mother, I’ve suffered for months and months.”

Cabesang Andang then resumed her lamentations. She did not ask that he declare himself a partizan of the friars, she was not one herself—it was enough to

know that for one good friar there were ten bad, who took the money from the poor and deported the rich. But one must be silent, suffer, and endure—there was no other course. She cited this man and that one, who by being *patient* and humble, even though in the bottom of his heart he hated his masters, had risen from servant of the friars to high office; and such another who was rich and could commit abuses, secure of having patrons who would protect him from the law, yet who had been nothing more than a poor sacristan, humble and obedient, and who had married a pretty girl whose son had the curate for a godfather. So Cabesang Andang continued her litany of humble and *patient* Filipinos, as she called them, and was about to cite others who by not being so had found themselves persecuted and exiled, when Placido on some trifling pretext left the house to wander about the streets.

He passed through Sibakong,[2] Tondo, San Nicolas, and Santo Cristo, absorbed in his ill-humor, without taking note of the sun or the hour, and only when he began to feel hungry and discovered that he had no money, having given it all for celebrations and contributions, did he return to the house. He had expected that he would not meet his mother there, as

she was in the habit, when in Manila, of going out at that hour to a neighboring house where [179]*panguingui* was played, but Cabesang Andang was waiting to propose her plan. She would avail herself of the procurator of the Augustinians to restore her son to the good graces of the Dominicans.

Placido stopped her with a gesture. “I’ll throw myself into the sea first,” he declared. “I’ll become a tulisan before I’ll go back to the University.”

Again his mother began her preachment about patience and humility, so he went away again without having eaten anything, directing his steps toward the quay where the steamers tied up. The sight of a steamer weighing anchor for Hongkong inspired him with an idea—to go to Hongkong, to run away, get rich there, and make war on the friars.

The thought of Hongkong awoke in his mind the recollection of a story about frontals, cirials, and candelabra of pure silver, which the piety of the faithful had led them to present to a certain church. The friars, so the silversmith told, had sent to Hongkong to have duplicate frontals, cirials, and candelabra made of German silver, which they substituted for the genuine ones, these being melted

down and coined into Mexican pesos. Such was the story he had heard, and though it was no more than a rumor or a story, his resentment gave it the color of truth and reminded him of other tricks of theirs in that same style. The desire to live free, and certain half-formed plans, led him to decide upon Hongkong. If the corporations sent all their money there, commerce must be flourishing and he could enrich himself.

“I want to be free, to live free!”

Night surprised him wandering along San Fernando, but not meeting any sailor he knew, he decided to return home. As the night was beautiful, with a brilliant moon transforming the squalid city into a fantastic fairy kingdom, he went to the fair. There he wandered back and forth, passing booths without taking any notice of the articles in them, ever with the thought of Hongkong, of living free, of enriching himself.[180]

He was about to leave the fair when he thought he recognized the jeweler Simoun bidding good-by to a foreigner, both of them speaking in English. To Placido every language spoken in the Philippines by Europeans, when not Spanish, had to be English, and

besides, he caught the name Hongkong. If only the jeweler would recommend him to that foreigner, who must be setting out for Hongkong!

Placido paused. He was acquainted with the jeweler, as the latter had been in his town peddling his wares, and he had accompanied him on one of his trips, when Simoun had made himself very amiable indeed, telling him of the life in the universities of the free countries—what a difference!

So he followed the jeweler. “Señor Simoun, Señor Simoun!” he called.

The jeweler was at that moment entering his carriage. Recognizing Placido, he checked himself.

“I want to ask a favor of you, to say a few words to you.”

Simoun made a sign of impatience which Placido in his perturbation did not observe. In a few words the youth related what had happened and made known his desire to go to Hongkong.

“Why?” asked Simoun, staring fixedly at Placido through his blue goggles.

Placido did not answer, so Simoun threw back his head, smiled his cold, silent smile and said, “All

right! Come with me. To Calle Iris!" he directed the cochero.

Simoun remained silent throughout the whole drive, apparently absorbed in meditation of a very important nature. Placido kept quiet, waiting for him to speak first, and entertained himself in watching the promenaders who were enjoying the clear moonlight: pairs of infatuated lovers, followed by watchful mammas or aunts; groups of students in white clothes that the moonlight made whiter still; half-drunken soldiers in a carriage, six together, on their way to visit some nipa temple dedicated to Cytherea; [181]children playing their games and Chinese selling sugar-cane. All these filled the streets, taking on in the brilliant moonlight fantastic forms and ideal outlines. In one house an orchestra was playing waltzes, and couples might be seen dancing under the bright lamps and chandeliers—what a sordid spectacle they presented in comparison with the sight the streets afforded! Thinking of Hongkong, he asked himself if the moonlit nights in that island were so poetical and sweetly melancholy as those of the Philippines, and a deep sadness settled down over his heart.

Simoun ordered the carriage to stop and both alighted, just at the moment when Isagani and Paulita Gomez passed them murmuring sweet inanities. Behind them came Doña Victorina with Juanito Pelaez, who was talking in a loud voice, busily gesticulating, and appearing to have a larger hump than ever. In his preoccupation Pelaez did not notice his former schoolmate.

“There’s a fellow who’s happy!” muttered Placido with a sigh, as he gazed toward the group, which became converted into vaporous silhouettes, with Juanito’s arms plainly visible, rising and falling like the arms of a windmill.

“That’s all he’s good for,” observed Simoun. “It’s fine to be young!”

To whom did Placido and Simoun each allude?

The jeweler made a sign to the young man, and they left the street to pick their way through a labyrinth of paths and passageways among various houses, at times leaping upon stones to avoid the mudholes or stepping aside from the sidewalks that were badly constructed and still more badly tended. Placido was surprised to see the rich jeweler move through such places as if he were familiar with them. They at

length reached an open lot where a wretched hut stood off by itself surrounded by banana-plants and areca-palms. Some bamboo frames and sections of the same material led Placido to suspect that they were approaching the house of a pyrotechnist.[182]

Simoun rapped on the window and a man's face appeared.

"Ah, sir!" he exclaimed, and immediately came outside.

"Is the powder here?" asked Simoun.

"In sacks. I'm waiting for the shells."

"And the bombs?"

"Are all ready."

"All right, then. This very night you must go and inform the lieutenant and the corporal. Then keep on your way, and in Lamayan you will find a man in a banka. You will say *Cabesa* and he will answer *Tales*. It's necessary that he be here tomorrow. There's no time to be lost."

Saying this, he gave him some gold coins.

"How's this, sir?" the man inquired in very good Spanish. "Is there any news?"

“Yes, it’ll be done within the coming week.”

“The coming week!” exclaimed the unknown, stepping backward. “The suburbs are not yet ready, they hope that the General will withdraw the decree. I thought it was postponed until the beginning of Lent.”

Simoun shook his head. “We won’t need the suburbs,” he said. “With Cabesang Tales’ people, the ex-carbineers, and a regiment, we’ll have enough. Later, Maria Clara may be dead. Start at once!”

The man disappeared. Placido, who had stood by and heard all of this brief interview, felt his hair rise and stared with startled eyes at Simoun, who smiled.

“You’re surprised,” he said with his icy smile, “that this Indian, so poorly dressed, speaks Spanish well? He was a schoolmaster who persisted in teaching Spanish to the children and did not stop until he had lost his position and had been deported as a disturber of the public peace, and for having been a friend of the unfortunate Ibarra. I got him back from his deportation, where he had been working as a pruner of coconut-palms, and have made him a pyrotechnist.”

They returned to the street and set out for Trozo. Before [183]a wooden house of pleasant and well-kept appearance was a Spaniard on crutches, enjoying the moonlight. When Simoun accosted him, his attempt to rise was accompanied by a stifled groan.

“You’re ready?” Simoun inquired of him.

“I always am!”

“The coming week?”

“So soon?”

“At the first cannon-shot!”

He moved away, followed by Placido, who was beginning to ask himself if he were not dreaming.

“Does it surprise you,” Simoun asked him, “to see a Spaniard so young and so afflicted with disease? Two years ago he was as robust as you are, but his enemies succeeded in sending him to Balabak to work in a penal settlement, and there he caught the rheumatism and fever that are dragging him into the grave. The poor devil had married a very beautiful woman.”

As an empty carriage was passing, Simoun hailed it and with Placido directed it to his house in the

Escolta, just at the moment when the clocks were striking half-past ten.

Two hours later Placido left the jeweler's house and walked gravely and thoughtfully along the Escolta, then almost deserted, in spite of the fact that the cafés were still quite animated. Now and then a carriage passed rapidly, clattering noisily over the worn pavement.

From a room in his house that overlooked the Pasig, Simoun turned his gaze toward the Walled City, which could be seen through the open windows, with its roofs of galvanized iron gleaming in the moonlight and its somber towers showing dull and gloomy in the midst of the serene night. He laid aside his blue goggles, and his white hair, like a frame of silver, surrounded his energetic bronzed features, dimly lighted by a lamp whose flame was dying out from lack of oil. Apparently wrapped in thought, he took no notice of the fading light and impending darkness.[184]

"Within a few days," he murmured, "when on all sides that accursed city is burning, den of presumptuous nothingness and impious exploitation of the ignorant and the distressed, when the tumults

break out in the suburbs and there rush into the terrorized streets my avenging hordes, engendered by rapacity and wrongs, then will I burst the walls of your prison, I will tear you from the clutches of fanaticism, and my white dove, you will be the Phoenix that will rise from the glowing embers! A revolution plotted by men in darkness tore me from your side—another revolution will sweep me into your arms and revive me! That moon, before reaching the apogee of its brilliance, will light the Philippines cleansed of loathsome filth!”

Simoun, stopped suddenly, as though interrupted. A voice in his inner consciousness was asking if he, Simoun, were not also a part of the filth of that accursed city, perhaps its most poisonous ferment. Like the dead who are to rise at the sound of the last trumpet, a thousand bloody specters—desperate shades of murdered men, women violated, fathers torn from their families, vices stimulated and encouraged, virtues mocked, now rose in answer to the mysterious question. For the first time in his criminal career, since in Havana he had by means of corruption and bribery set out to fashion an instrument for the execution of his plans—a man without faith, patriotism, or conscience—for the first

time in that life, something within rose up and protested against his actions. He closed his eyes and remained for some time motionless, then rubbed his hand over his forehead, tried to be deaf to his conscience, and felt fear creeping over him. No, he must not analyze himself, he lacked the courage to turn his gaze toward his past. The idea of his courage, his conviction, his self-confidence failing him at the very moment when his work was set before him! As the ghosts of the wretches in whose misfortunes he had taken a hand continued to hover before his eyes, as if issuing from the shining surface of the river to invade the room with appeals and hands extended toward [185]him, as reproaches and laments seemed to fill the air with threats and cries for vengeance, he turned his gaze from the window and for the first time began to tremble.

“No, I must be ill, I can’t be feeling well,” he muttered. “There are many who hate me, who ascribe their misfortunes to me, but—”

He felt his forehead begin to burn, so he arose to approach the window and inhale the fresh night breeze. Below him the Pasig dragged along its silvered stream, on whose bright surface the foam glittered, winding slowly about, receding and

advancing, following the course of the little eddies. The city loomed up on the opposite bank, and its black walls looked fateful, mysterious, losing their sordidness in the moonlight that idealizes and embellishes everything. But again Simoun shivered; he seemed to see before him the severe countenance of his father, dying in prison, but dying for having done good; then the face of another man, severer still, who had given his life for him because he believed that he was going to bring about the regeneration of his country.

“No, I can’t turn back,” he exclaimed, wiping the perspiration from his forehead. “The work is at hand and its success will justify me! If I had conducted myself as you did, I should have succumbed. Nothing of idealism, nothing of fallacious theories! Fire and steel to the cancer, chastisement to vice, and afterwards destroy the instrument, if it be bad! No, I have planned well, but now I feel feverish, my reason wavers, it is natural—If I have done ill, it has been that I may do good, and the end justifies the means. What I will do is not to expose myself—”

With his thoughts thus confused he lay down, and tried to fall asleep.

On the following morning Placido listened submissively, with a smile on his lips, to his mother's preachment. When she spoke of her plan of interesting the Augustinian procurator he did not protest or object, but on the contrary offered himself to carry it out, in order to save trouble for [186]his mother, whom he begged to return at once to the province, that very day, if possible. Cabesang Andang asked him the reason for such haste.

"Because—because if the procurator learns that you are here he won't do anything until you send him a present and order some masses."[187]

[1] The Malay method of kissing is quite different from the Occidental. The mouth is placed close to the object and a deep breath taken, often [178n]without actually touching the object, being more of a sniff than a kiss.—Tr.

[2] Now Calle Tetuan, Santa Cruz. The other names are still in use.—Tr.

The Arbiter

True it was that Padre Irene had said: the question of the academy of Castilian, so long before broached, was on the road to a solution. Don Custodio, the active Don Custodio, the most active of all the arbiters in the world, according to Ben-Zayb, was occupied with it, spending his days reading the petition and falling asleep without reaching any decision, waking on the following day to repeat the same performance, dropping off to sleep again, and so on continuously.

How the good man labored, the most active of all the arbiters in the world! He wished to get out of the predicament by pleasing everybody—the friars, the high official, the Countess, Padre Irene, and his own liberal principles. He had consulted with Señor Pasta, and Señor Pasta had left him stupefied and confused, after advising him to do a million contradictory and impossible things. He had consulted with Pepay the dancing girl, and Pepay, who had no idea what he was talking about, executed a pirouette and asked him for twenty-five pesos to bury an aunt of hers who had suddenly died for the fifth time, or the fifth aunt who had suddenly died, according to fuller explanations, at the same time requesting that he get

a cousin of hers who could read, write, and play the violin, a job as assistant on the public works—all things that were far from inspiring Don Custodio with any saving idea.

Two days after the events in the Quiapo fair, Don Custodio was as usual busily studying the petition, without hitting upon the happy solution. While he yawns, coughs, smokes, and thinks about Pepay's legs and her pirouettes, [188]let us give some account of this exalted personage, in order to understand Padre Sibyla's reason for proposing him as the arbiter of such a vexatious matter and why the other clique accepted him.

Don Custodio de Salazar y Sanchez de Monteredondo, often referred to as *Good Authority*, belonged to that class of Manila society which cannot take a step without having the newspapers heap titles upon them, calling each *indedefatigable, distinguished, zealous, active, profound, intelligent, well-informed, influential*, and so on, as if they feared that he might be confused with some idle and ignorant possessor of the same name. Besides, no harm resulted from it, and the watchful censor was not disturbed. The *Good Authority* resulted from his friendship with Ben-Zayb, when the latter, in his two

noisiest controversies, which he carried on for weeks and months in the columns of the newspapers about whether it was proper to wear a high hat, a derby, or a *salakot,* and whether the plural of *carácter* should be *carácteres* or *caractéres,* in order to strengthen his argument always came out with, “We have this on good authority,” “We learn this from good authority,” later letting it be known, for in Manila everything becomes known, that this*Good Authority* was no other than Don Custodio de Salazar y Sanchez de Monteredondo.

He had come to Manila very young, with a good position that had enabled him to marry a pretty mestiza belonging to one of the wealthiest families of the city. As he had natural talent, boldness, and great self-possession, and knew how to make use of the society in which he found himself, he launched into business with his wife’s money, filling contracts for the government, by reason of which he was made alderman, afterwards alcalde, member of the Economic Society,[1] councilor of the administration, president [189]of the directory of the *Obras Pias*,[2] member of the Society of Mercy, director of the Spanish-Filipino Bank, etc., etc. Nor are these *etceteras*to be taken like those ordinarily placed

after a long enumeration of titles: Don Custodio, although never having seen a treatise on hygiene, came to be vice-chairman of the Board of Health, for the truth was that of the eight who composed this board only one had to be a physician and he could not be that one. So also he was a member of the Vaccination Board, which was composed of three physicians and seven laymen, among these being the Archbishop and three Provincials. He was a brother in all the confraternities of the common and of the most exalted dignity, and, as we have seen, director of the Superior Commission of Primary Instruction, which usually did not do anything—all these being quite sufficient reason for the newspapers to heap adjectives upon him no less when he traveled than when he sneezed.

In spite of so many offices, Don Custodio was not among those who slept through the sessions, contenting themselves, like lazy and timid delegates, in voting with the majority. The opposite of the numerous kings of Europe who bear the title of King of Jerusalem, Don Custodio made his dignity felt and got from it all the benefit possible, often frowning, making his voice impressive, coughing out his words, often taking up the whole session telling a story,

presenting a project, or disputing with a colleague who had placed himself in open opposition to him. Although not past forty, he already talked of acting with circumspection, of letting the figs ripen (adding under his breath "pumpkins"), of pondering deeply and of stepping with careful tread, of the necessity for understanding the country, because the nature of the Indians, because the prestige of the Spanish name, because they were first of all Spaniards, because religion—and so on. Remembered yet in Manila is a speech of his when for the first time it was proposed to [190]light the city with kerosene in place of the old coconut oil: in such an innovation, far from seeing the extinction of the coconut-oil industry, he merely discerned the interests of a certain alderman—because Don Custodio saw a long way—and opposed it with all the resonance of his bucal cavity, considering the project too premature and predicting great social cataclysms. No less celebrated was his opposition to a sentimental serenade that some wished to tender a certain governor on the eve of his departure. Don Custodio, who felt a little resentment over some slight or other, succeeded in insinuating the idea that the rising star was the mortal enemy of the setting one, whereat the frightened promoters of the serenade gave it up.

One day he was advised to return to Spain to be cured of a liver complaint, and the newspapers spoke of him as an Antaeus who had to set foot in the mother country to gain new strength. But the Manila Antaeus found himself a small and insignificant person at the capital. There he was nobody, and he missed his beloved adjectives. He did not mingle with the upper set, and his lack of education prevented him from amounting to much in the academies and scientific centers, while his backwardness and his parish-house politics drove him from the clubs disgusted, vexed, seeing nothing clearly but that there they were forever borrowing money and gambling heavily. He missed the submissive servants of Manila, who endured all his peevishness, and who now seemed to be far preferable; when a winter kept him between a fireplace and an attack of pneumonia, he sighed for the Manila winter during which a single quilt is sufficient, while in summer he missed the easy-chair and the boy to fan him. In short, in Madrid he was only one among many, and in spite of his diamonds he was once taken for a rustic who did not know how to comport himself and at another time for an *Indiano*. His scruples were scoffed at, and he was shamelessly flouted by some borrowers whom he

offended. Disgusted with the conservatives, who took no great notice of his advice, as well as with the [191]sponges who rifled his pockets, he declared himself to be of the liberal party and returned within a year to the Philippines, if not sound in his liver, yet completely changed in his beliefs.

The eleven months spent at the capital among café politicians, nearly all retired half-pay office-holders, the various speeches caught here and there, this or that article of the opposition, all the political life that permeates the air, from the barber-shop where amid the scissors-clips the Figaro announces his program to the banquets where in harmonious periods and telling phrases the different shades of political opinion, the divergences and disagreements, are adjusted—all these things awoke in him the farther he got from Europe, like the life-giving sap within the sown seed prevented from bursting out by the thick husk, in such a way that when he reached Manila he believed that he was going to regenerate it and actually had the holiest plans and the purest ideals.

During the first months after his return he was continually talking about the capital, about his good friends, about Minister So-and-So, ex-Minister Such-

a-One, the delegate C., the author B., and there was not a political event, a court scandal, of which he was not informed to the last detail, nor was there a public man the secrets of whose private life were unknown to him, nor could anything occur that he had not foreseen, nor any reform be ordered but he had first been consulted. All this was seasoned with attacks on the conservatives in righteous indignation, with apologies of the liberal party, with a little anecdote here, a phrase there from some great man, dropped in as one who did not wish offices and employments, which same he had refused in order not to be beholden to the conservatives. Such was his enthusiasm in these first days that various cronies in the grocery-store which he visited from time to time affiliated themselves with the liberal party and began to style themselves liberals: Don Eulogio Badana, a retired sergeant of carbineers; the honest Armendia, by [192]profession a pilot, and a rampant Carlist; Don Eusebio Picote, customs inspector; and Don Bonifacio Tacon, shoe- and harness-maker.[3]

But nevertheless, from lack of encouragement and of opposition, his enthusiasm gradually waned. He did not read the newspapers that came from Spain, because they arrived in packages, the sight of which

made him yawn. The ideas that he had caught having been all expended, he needed reinforcement, and his orators were not there, and although in the casinos of Manila there was enough gambling, and money was borrowed as in Madrid, no speech that would nourish his political ideas was permitted in them. But Don Custodio was not lazy, he did more than wish—he worked. Foreseeing that he was going to leave his bones in the Philippines, he began to consider that country his proper sphere and to devote his efforts to its welfare. Thinking to liberalize it, he commenced to draw up a series of reforms or projects, which were ingenious, to say the least. It was he who, having heard in Madrid mention of the wooden street pavements of Paris, not yet adopted in Spain, proposed the introduction of them in Manila by covering the streets with boards nailed down as they are on the sides of houses; it was he who, deploring the accidents to two-wheeled vehicles, planned to avoid them by putting on at least three wheels; it was also he who, while acting as vice-president of the Board of Health, ordered everything fumigated, even the telegrams that came from infected places; it was also he who, in compassion for the convicts that worked in the sun and with a desire of saving to the government the cost of their equipment, suggested

that they be clothed in a simple breech-clout and set to work not by day but at night. He marveled, he stormed, that his projects should encounter objectors, but consoled himself with the reflection that the man who is worth enemies has them, and revenged himself by attacking and [193]tearing to pieces any project, good or bad, presented by others.

As he prided himself on being a liberal, upon being asked what he thought of the Indians he would answer, like one conferring a great favor, that they were fitted for manual labor and the *imitative arts* (meaning thereby music, painting, and sculpture), adding his old postscript that to know them one must have resided many, many years in the country. Yet when he heard of any one of them excelling in something that was not manual labor or an *imitative art*—in chemistry, medicine, or philosophy, for example—he would exclaim: “Ah, he promises fairly, fairly well, he’s not a fool!” and feel sure that a great deal of Spanish blood must flow in the veins of such an*Indian*. If unable to discover any in spite of his good intentions, he then sought a Japanese origin, for it was at that time the fashion began of attributing to the Japanese or the Arabs whatever good the Filipinos might have in them. For

him the native songs were Arabic music, as was also the alphabet of the ancient Filipinos—he was certain of this, although he did not know Arabic nor had he ever seen that alphabet.

“Arabic, the purest Arabic,” he said to Ben-Zayb in a tone that admitted no reply. “At best, Chinese!”

Then he would add, with a significant wink: “Nothing can be, nothing ought to be, original with the Indians, you understand! I like them greatly, but they mustn’t be allowed to pride themselves upon anything, for then they would take heart and turn into a lot of wretches.”

At other times he would say: “I love the Indians fondly, I’ve constituted myself their father and defender, but it’s necessary to keep everything in its proper place. Some were born to command and others to serve—plainly, that is a truism which can’t be uttered very loudly, but it can be put into practise without many words. For look, the trick depends upon trifles. When you wish to reduce a people to subjection, assure it that it is in subjection. The [194]first day it will laugh, the second protest, the third doubt, and the fourth be convinced. To keep the Filipino docile, he must have repeated to him day

after day what he is, to convince him that he is incompetent. What good would it do, besides, to have him believe in something else that would make him wretched? Believe me, it's an act of charity to hold every creature in his place—that is order, harmony. That constitutes the *science* of government."

In referring to his policies, Don Custodio was not satisfied with the word *art*, and upon pronouncing the word *government*, he would extend his hand downwards to the height of a man bent over on his knees.

In regard to his religious ideas, he prided himself on being a Catholic, very much a Catholic—ah, Catholic Spain, the land of *María Santísima*! A liberal could be and ought to be a Catholic, when the reactionaries were setting themselves up as gods or saints, just as a mulatto passes for a white man in Kaffirland. But with all that, he ate meat during Lent, except on Good Friday, never went to confession, believed neither in miracles nor the infallibility of the Pope, and when he attended mass, went to the one at ten o'clock, or to the shortest, the military mass. Although in Madrid he had spoken ill of the religious orders, so as not to be out of harmony with his surroundings, considering them anachronisms, and

had hurled curses against the Inquisition, while relating this or that lurid or droll story wherein the habits danced, or rather friars without habits, yet in speaking of the Philippines, which should be ruled by special laws, he would cough, look wise, and again extend his hand downwards to that mysterious altitude.

“The friars are necessary, they’re a necessary evil,” he would declare.

But how he would rage when any Indian dared to doubt the miracles or did not acknowledge the Pope! All the tortures of the Inquisition were insufficient to punish such temerity.

When it was objected that to rule or to live at the expense [195]of ignorance has another and somewhat ugly name and is punished by law when the culprit is a single person, he would justify his position by referring to other colonies. “We,” he would announce in his official tone, “can speak out plainly! We’re not like the British and the Dutch who, in order to hold people in subjection, make use of the lash. We avail ourselves of other means, milder and surer. The salutary influence of the friars is superior to the British lash.”

This last remark made his fortune. For a long time Ben-Zayb continued to use adaptations of it, and with him all Manila. The thinking part of Manila applauded it, and it even got to Madrid, where it was quoted in the Parliament as from *a liberal of long residence there*. The friars, flattered by the comparison and seeing their prestige enhanced, sent him sacks of chocolate, presents which the incorruptible Don Custodio returned, so that Ben-Zayb immediately compared him to Epaminondas. Nevertheless, this modern Epaminondas made use of the rattan in his choleric moments, and advised its use!

At that time the conventos, fearful that he would render a decision favorable to the petition of the students, increased their gifts, so that on the afternoon when we see him he was more perplexed than ever, his reputation for energy was being compromised. It had been more than a fortnight since he had had the petition in his hands, and only that morning the high official, after praising his zeal, had asked for a decision. Don Custodio had replied with mysterious gravity, giving him to understand that it was not yet completed. The high official had smiled a smile that still worried and haunted him.

As we were saying, he yawned and yawned. In one of these movements, at the moment when he opened his eyes and closed his mouth, his attention was caught by a file of red envelopes, arranged in regular order on a magnificent kamagon desk. On the back of each could be read in large letters: PROJECTS.[196]

For a moment he forgot his troubles and Pepay's pirouettes, to reflect upon all that those files contained, which had issued from his prolific brain in his hours of inspiration. How many original ideas, how many sublime thoughts, how many means of ameliorating the woes of the Philippines! Immortality and the gratitude of the country were surely his!

Like an old lover who discovers a moldy package of amorous epistles, Don Custodio arose and approached the desk. The first envelope, thick, swollen, and plethoric, bore the title: PROJECTS IN PROJECT.

"No," he murmured, "they're excellent things, but it would take a year to read them over."

The second, also quite voluminous, was entitled: PROJECTS UNDER CONSIDERATION. "No, not those either."

Then came the PROJECTS NEARING COMPLETION, PROJECTS PRESENTED, PROJECTS REJECTED, PROJECTS APPROVED, PROJECTS POSTPONED. These last envelopes held little, but the least of all was that of the PROJECTS EXECUTED.

Don Custodio wrinkled up his nose—what did it contain? He had completely forgotten what was in it. A sheet of yellowish paper showed from under the flap, as though the envelope were sticking out its tongue. This he drew out and unfolded: it was the famous project for the School of Arts and Trades!

"What the devil!" he exclaimed. "If the Augustinian padres took charge of it—"

Suddenly he slapped his forehead and arched his eyebrows, while a look of triumph overspread his face. "I have reached a decision!" he cried with an oath that was not exactly *eureka*. "My decision is made!"

Repeating his peculiar *eureka* five or six times, which struck the air like so many gleeful lashes, he sat down at his desk, radiant with joy, and began to write furiously.[197]

[1] The *Sociedad Económica de Amigos del País* for the encouragement of agricultural and industrial development, was established by Basco de Vargas in 1780.—Tr.

[2] Funds managed by the government for making loans and supporting charitable enterprises.—Tr.

[3] The names are fictitious burlesques.—Tr.

Manila Types

That night there was a grand function at the Teatro de Variedades. Mr. Jouay's French operetta company was giving its initial performance, *Les Cloches de Corneville*. To the eyes of the public was to be exhibited his select troupe, whose fame the newspapers had for days been proclaiming. It was reported that among the actresses was a very beautiful voice, with a figure even more beautiful, and if credit could be given to rumor, her amiability surpassed even her voice and figure.

At half-past seven in the evening there were no more tickets to be had, not even though they had been for Padre Salvi himself in his direct need, and the persons waiting to enter the general admission already formed a long queue. In the ticket-office there were scuffles and fights, talk of filibusterism and races, but this did not produce any tickets, so that by a quarter before eight fabulous prices were being offered for them. The appearance of the building, profusely illuminated, with flowers and plants in all the doors and windows, enchanted the new arrivals to such an extent that they burst out into exclamations and applause. A large crowd surged about the entrance, gazing enviously at those going in, those

who came early from fear of missing their seats. Laughter, whispering, expectation greeted the later arrivals, who disconsolately joined the curious crowd, and now that they could not get in contented themselves with watching those who did.

Yet there was one person who seemed out of place amid such great eagerness and curiosity. He was a tall, meager man, who dragged one leg stiffly when he walked, dressed [198]in a wretched brown coat and dirty checkered trousers that fitted his lean, bony limbs tightly. A straw sombrero, artistic in spite of being broken, covered an enormous head and allowed his dirty gray, almost red, hair to straggle out long and kinky at the end like a poet's curls. But the most notable thing about this man was not his clothing or his European features, guiltless of beard or mustache, but his fiery red face, from which he got the nickname by which he was known,*Camaroncocido*.[1] He was a curious character belonging to a prominent Spanish family, but he lived like a vagabond and a beggar, scoffing at the prestige which he flouted indifferently with his rags. He was reputed to be a kind of reporter, and in fact his gray goggle-eyes, so cold and thoughtful, always showed up where anything publishable was happening. His

manner of living was a mystery to all, as no one seemed to know where he ate and slept. Perhaps he had an empty hogshead somewhere.

But at that moment Camaroncocido lacked his usual hard and indifferent expression, something like mirthful pity being reflected in his looks. A funny little man accosted him merrily.

“Friend!” exclaimed the latter, in a raucous voice, as hoarse as a frog’s, while he displayed several Mexican pesos, which Camaroncocido merely glanced at and then shrugged his shoulders. What did they matter to him?

The little old man was a fitting contrast to him. Small, very small, he wore on his head a high hat, which presented the appearance of a huge hairy worm, and lost himself in an enormous frock coat, too wide and too long for him, to reappear in trousers too short, not reaching below his calves. His body seemed to be the grandfather and his legs the grandchildren, while as for his shoes he appeared to be floating on the land, for they were of an enormous sailor type, apparently protesting against the hairy worm [199]worn on his head with all the energy of a convento beside a World’s Exposition. If

Camaroncocido was red, he was brown; while the former, although of Spanish extraction, had not a single hair on his face, yet he, an Indian, had a goatee and mustache, both long, white, and sparse. His expression was lively. He was known as *Tio Quico*,[2] and like his friend lived on publicity, advertising the shows and posting the theatrical announcements, being perhaps the only Filipino who could appear with impunity in a silk hat and frock coat, just as his friend was the first Spaniard who laughed at the prestige of his race.

"The Frenchman has paid me well," he said smiling and showing his picturesque gums, which looked like a street after a conflagration. "I did a good job in posting the bills."

Camaroncocido shrugged his shoulders again. "Quico," he rejoined in a cavernous voice, "if they've given you six pesos for your work, how much will they give the friars?"

Tio Quico threw back his head in his usual lively manner. "To the friars?"

"Because you surely know," continued Camaroncocido, "that all this crowd was secured for them by the conventos."

The fact was that the friars, headed by Padre Salvi, and some lay brethren captained by Don Custodio, had opposed such shows. Padre Camorra, who could not attend, watered at the eyes and mouth, but argued with Ben-Zayb, who defended them feebly, thinking of the free tickets they would send his newspaper. Don Custodio spoke of morality, religion, good manners, and the like.

"But," stammered the writer, "if our own farces with their plays on words and phrases of double meaning —"

"But at least they're in Castilian!" the virtuous councilor interrupted with a roar, inflamed to righteous wrath. "Obscenities in French, man, Ben-Zayb, for God's sake, in French! Never!"[200]

He uttered this *never* with the energy of three Guzmans threatened with being killed like fleas if they did not surrender twenty Tarifas. Padre Irene naturally agreed with Don Custodio and execrated French operetta. Whew, he had been in Paris, but had never set foot in a theater, the Lord deliver him!

Yet the French operetta also counted numerous partizans. The officers of the army and navy, among them the General's aides, the clerks, and many

society people were anxious to enjoy the delicacies of the French language from the mouths of genuine *Parisiennes*, and with them were affiliated those who had traveled by the M.M.[3] and had jabbered a little French during the voyage, those who had visited Paris, and all those who wished to appear learned.

Hence, Manila society was divided into two factions, operettists and anti-operettists. The latter were supported by the elderly ladies, wives jealous and careful of their husbands' love, and by those who were engaged, while those who were free and those who were beautiful declared themselves enthusiastic operettists. Notes and then more notes were exchanged, there were goings and comings, mutual recriminations, meetings, lobbyings, arguments, even talk of an insurrection of the natives, of their indolence, of inferior and superior races, of prestige and other humbugs, so that after much gossip and more recrimination, the permit was granted, Padre Salvi at the same time publishing a pastoral that was read by no one but the proof-reader. There were questionings whether the General had quarreled with the Countess, whether she spent her time in the halls of pleasure, whether His Excellency was greatly

annoyed, whether there had been presents exchanged, whether the French consul—, and so on and on. Many names were bandied about: Quiroga the Chinaman's, Simoun's, and even those of many actresses.

Thanks to these scandalous preliminaries, the people's [201]impatience had been aroused, and since the evening before, when the troupe arrived, there was talk of nothing but attending the first performance. From the hour when the red posters announced *Les Cloches de Corneville* the victors prepared to celebrate their triumph. In some offices, instead of the time being spent in reading newspapers and gossiping, it was devoted to devouring the synopsis and spelling out French novels, while many feigned business outside to consult their pocket-dictionaries on the sly. So no business was transacted, callers were told to come back the next day, but the public could not take offense, for they encountered some very polite and affable clerks, who received and dismissed them with grand salutations in the French style. The clerks were practising, brushing the dust off their French, and calling to one another *oui, monsieur, s'il vous plait*, and *pardon*! at every turn, so that it was a pleasure to see and hear them.

But the place where the excitement reached its climax was the newspaper office. Ben-Zayb, having been appointed critic and translator of the synopsis, trembled like a poor woman accused of witchcraft, as he saw his enemies picking out his blunders and throwing up to his face his deficient knowledge of French. When the Italian opera was on, he had very nearly received a challenge for having mistranslated a tenor's name, while an envious rival had immediately published an article referring to him as an ignoramus—him, the foremost thinking head in the Philippines! All the trouble he had had to defend himself! He had had to write at least seventeen articles and consult fifteen dictionaries, so with these salutary recollections, the wretched Ben-Zayb moved about with leaden hands, to say nothing of his feet, for that would be plagiarizing Padre Camorra, who had once intimated that the journalist wrote with them.

"You see, Quico?" said Camaroncocido. "One half of the people have come because the friars told them not to, making it a kind of public protest, and the other half because [202]they say to themselves, 'Do the friars object to it? Then it must be instructive!' Believe me, Quico, your advertisements are a good thing but the

pastoral was better, even taking into consideration the fact that it was read by no one."

"Friend, do you believe," asked Tio Quico uneasily, "that on account of the competition with Padre Salvi my business will in the future be prohibited?"

"Maybe so, Quico, maybe so," replied the other, gazing at the sky. "Money's getting scarce."

Tio Quico muttered some incoherent words: if the friars were going to turn theatrical advertisers, he would become a friar. After bidding his friend good-by, he moved away coughing and rattling his silver coins.

With his eternal indifference Camaroncocido continued to wander about here and there with his crippled leg and sleepy looks. The arrival of unfamiliar faces caught his attention, coming as they did from different parts and signaling to one another with a wink or a cough. It was the first time that he had ever seen these individuals on such an occasion, he who knew all the faces and features in the city. Men with dark faces, humped shoulders, uneasy and uncertain movements, poorly disguised, as though they had for the first time put on sack coats, slipped about among the shadows, shunning attention,

instead of getting in the front rows where they could see well.

“Detectives or thieves?” Camaroncocido asked himself and immediately shrugged his shoulders. “But what is it to me?”

The lamp of a carriage that drove up lighted in passing a group of four or five of these individuals talking with a man who appeared to be an army officer.

“Detectives! It must be a new corps,” he muttered with his shrug of indifference. Soon, however, he noticed that the officer, after speaking to two or three more groups, approached a carriage and seemed to be talking vigorously with some person inside. Camaroncocido took a few steps [203]forward and without surprise thought that he recognized the jeweler Simoun, while his sharp ears caught this short dialogue.

“The signal will be a gunshot!”

“Yes, sir.”

“Don’t worry—it’s the General who is ordering it, but be careful about saying so. If you follow my instructions, you’ll get a promotion.”

“Yes, sir.”

“So, be ready!”

The voice ceased and a second later the carriage drove away. In spite of his indifference Camaroncocido could not but mutter, “Something’s afoot—hands on pockets!”

But feeling his own to be empty, he again shrugged his shoulders. What did it matter to him, even though the heavens should fall?

So he continued his pacing about. On passing near two persons engaged in conversation, he caught what one of them, who had rosaries and scapularies around his neck, was saying in Tagalog: “The friars are more powerful than the General, don’t be a fool! He’ll go away and they’ll stay here. So, if we do well, we’ll get rich. The signal is a gunshot.”

“Hold hard, hold hard,” murmured Camaroncocido, tightening his fingers. “On that side the General, on this Padre Salvi. Poor country! But what is it to me?”

Again shrugging his shoulders and expectorating at the same time, two actions that with him were indications of supreme indifference, he continued his observations.

Meanwhile, the carriages were arriving in dizzy streams, stopping directly before the door to set down the members of the select society. Although the weather was scarcely even cool, the ladies sported magnificent shawls, silk neckerchiefs, and even light cloaks. Among the escorts, some who were in frock coats with white ties wore overcoats, while others carried them on their arms to display the rich silk linings.[204]

In a group of spectators, Tadeo, he who was always taken ill the moment the professor appeared, was accompanied by a fellow townsman of his, the novice whom we saw suffer evil consequences from reading wrongly the Cartesian principle. This novice was very inquisitive and addicted to tiresome questions, and Tadeo was taking advantage of his ingenuousness and inexperience to relate to him the most stupendous lies. Every Spaniard that spoke to him, whether clerkling or underling, was presented as a leading merchant, a marquis, or a count, while on the other hand any one who passed him by was a greenhorn, a petty official, a nobody! When pedestrians failed him in keeping up the novice's astonishment, he resorted to the resplendent carriages that came up. Tadeo would bow politely, wave his

hand in a friendly manner, and call out a familiar greeting.

“Who’s he?”

“Bah!” was the negligent reply. “The Civil Governor, the Vice-Governor, Judge ——, Señora ——, all friends of mine!”

The novice marveled and listened in fascination, taking care to keep on the left. Tadeo the friend of judges and governors!

Tadeo named all the persons who arrived, when he did not know them inventing titles, biographies, and interesting sketches.

“You see that tall gentleman with dark whiskers, somewhat squint-eyed, dressed in black—he’s Judge A ——, an intimate friend of the wife of Colonel B ——. One day if it hadn’t been for me they would have come to blows. Hello, here comes that Colonel! What if they should fight?”

The novice held his breath, but the colonel and the judge shook hands cordially, the soldier, an old bachelor, inquiring about the health of the judge’s family.

“Ah, thank heaven!” breathed Tadeo. “I’m the one who made them friends.”[205]

“What if they should invite us to go in?” asked the novice timidly.

“Get out, boy! I never accept favors!” retorted Tadeo majestically. “I confer them, but disinterestedly.”

The novice bit his lip and felt smaller than ever, while he placed a respectful distance between himself and his fellow townsman.

Tadeo resumed: “That is the musician H——; that one, the lawyer J——, who delivered as his own a speech printed in all the books and was congratulated and admired for it; Doctor K——, that man just getting out of a hansom, is a specialist in diseases of children, so he’s called Herod; that’s the banker L ——, who can talk only of his money and his hoards; the poet M——, who is always dealing with the stars and *the beyond*. There goes the beautiful wife of N ——, whom Padre Q——is accustomed to meet when he calls upon the absent husband; the Jewish merchant P——, who came to the islands with a thousand pesos and is now a millionaire. That fellow with the long beard is the physician R——, who has

become rich by making invalids more than by curing them.”

“Making invalids?”

“Yes, boy, in the examination of the conscripts. Attention! That finely dressed gentleman is not a physician but a homeopathist *sui generis*—he professes completely the *similis similibus*. The young cavalry captain with him is his chosen disciple. That man in a light suit with his hat tilted back is the government clerk whose maxim is never to be polite and who rages like a demon when he sees a hat on any one else’s head—they say that he does it to ruin the German hatters. The man just arriving with his family is the wealthy merchant C——, who has an income of over a hundred thousand pesos. But what would you say if I should tell you that he still owes me four pesos, five reales, and twelve cuartos? But who would collect from a rich man like him?”

“That gentleman in debt to you?”[206]

“Sure! One day I got him out of a bad fix. It was on a Friday at half-past six in the morning, I still remember, because I hadn’t breakfasted. That lady who is followed by a duenna is the celebrated Pepay, the dancing girl, but she doesn’t dance any more now

that a very Catholic gentleman and a great friend of mine has—forbidden it. There's the death's-head Z ——, who's surely following her to get her to dance again. He's a good fellow, and a great friend of mine, but has one defect—he's a Chinese mestizo and yet calls himself a Peninsular Spaniard. Sssh! Look at Ben-Zayb, him with the face of a friar, who's carrying a pencil and a roll of paper in his hand. He's the great writer, Ben-Zayb, a good friend of mine—he has talent!"

"You don't say! And that little man with white whiskers?"

"He's the official who has appointed his daughters, those three little girls, assistants in his department, so as to get their names on the pay-roll. He's a clever man, very clever! When he makes a mistake he blames it on somebody else, he buys things and pays for them out of the treasury. He's clever, very, very clever!"

Tadeo was about to say more, but suddenly checked himself.

"And that gentleman who has a fierce air and gazes at everybody over his shoulders?" inquired the novice, pointing to a man who nodded haughtily.

But Tadeo did not answer. He was craning his neck to see Paulita Gomez, who was approaching with a friend, Doña Victorina, and Juanito Pelaez. The latter had presented her with a box and was more humped than ever.

Carriage after carriage drove up; the actors and actresses arrived and entered by a separate door, followed by their friends and admirers.

After Paulita had gone in, Tadeo resumed: “Those are the nieces of the rich Captain D——, those coming up in a landau; you see how pretty and healthy they are? Well, [207]in a few years they’ll be dead or crazy. Captain D—— is opposed to their marrying, and the insanity of the uncle is appearing in the nieces. That’s the Señorita E——, the rich heiress whom the world and the conventos are disputing over. Hello, I know that fellow! It’s Padre Irene, in disguise, with a false mustache. I recognize him by his nose. And he was so greatly opposed to this!”

The scandalized novice watched a neatly cut coat disappear behind a group of ladies.

“The Three Fates!” went on Tadeo, watching the arrival of three withered, bony, hollow-eyed, wide-

mouthed, and shabbily dressed women. “They’re called—”

“Atropos?” ventured the novice, who wished to show that he also knew somebody, at least in mythology.

“No, boy, they’re called the Weary Waiters—old, censorious, and dull. They pretend to hate everybody —men, women, and children. But look how the Lord always places beside the evil a remedy, only that sometimes it comes late. There behind the Fates, the frights of the city, come those three girls, the pride of their friends, among whom I count myself. That thin young man with goggle-eyes, somewhat stooped, who is wildly gesticulating because he can’t get tickets, is the chemist S——, author of many essays and scientific treatises, some of which are notable and have captured prizes. The Spaniards say of him, ‘There’s some hope for him, some hope for him.’ The fellow who is soothing him with his Voltairian smile is the poet T——, a young man of talent, a great friend of mine, and, for the very reason that he has talent, he has thrown away his pen. That fellow who is trying to get in with the actors by the other door is the young physician U——, who has effected some remarkable cures—it’s also said of him that he promises well. He’s not such a scoundrel as Pelaez

but he’s cleverer and slyer still. I believe that he’d shake dice with death and win.”

“And that brown gentleman with a mustache like hog-bristles?”[208]

“Ah, that’s the merchant F——, who forges everything, even his baptismal certificate. He wants to be a Spanish mestizo at any cost, and is making heroic efforts to forget his native language.”

“But his daughters are very white.”

“Yes, that’s the reason rice has gone up in price, and yet they eat nothing but bread.”

The novice did not understand the connection between the price of rice and the whiteness of those girls, but he held his peace.

“There goes the fellow that’s engaged to one of them, that thin brown youth who is following them with a lingering movement and speaking with a protecting air to the three friends who are laughing at him. He’s a martyr to his beliefs, to his consistency.”

The novice was filled with admiration and respect for the young man.

“He has the look of a fool, and he is one,” continued Tadeo. “He was born in San Pedro Makati and has inflicted many privations upon himself. He scarcely ever bathes or eats pork, because, according to him, the Spaniards don’t do those things, and for the same reason he doesn’t eat rice and dried fish, although he may be watering at the mouth and dying of hunger. Anything that comes from Europe, rotten or preserved, he considers divine—a month ago Basilio cured him of a severe attack of gastritis, for he had eaten a jar of mustard to prove that he’s a European.”

At that moment the orchestra struck up a waltz.

“You see that gentleman—that hypochondriac who goes along turning his head from side to side, seeking salutes? That’s the celebrated governor of Pangasinan, a good man who loses his appetite whenever any Indian fails to salute him. He would have died if he hadn’t issued the proclamation about salutes to which he owes his celebrity. Poor fellow, it’s only been three days since he came from the province and look how thin he has become! Oh, here’s the great man, the illustrious—open your eyes!”[209]

“Who? That man with knitted brows?”

“Yes, that’s Don Custodio, the liberal, Don Custodio. His brows are knit because he’s meditating over some important project. If the ideas he has in his head were carried out, this would be a different world! Ah, here comes Makaraig, your housemate.”

It was in fact Makaraig, with Pecson, Sandoval, and Isagani. Upon seeing them, Tadeo advanced and spoke to them.

“Aren’t you coming in?” Makaraig asked him.

“We haven’t been able to get tickets.”

“Fortunately, we have a box,” replied Makaraig. “Basilio couldn’t come. Both of you, come in with us.”

Tadeo did not wait for the invitation to be repeated, but the novice, fearing that he would intrude, with the timidity natural to the provincial Indian, excused himself, nor could he be persuaded to enter.[210]

[1] “Boiled Shrimp”—Tr.

[2] “Uncle Frank.”—Tr.

[3] Messageries Maritimes, a French line of steamers in the Oriental trade.—Tr.

The Performance

The interior of the theater presented a lively aspect. It was filled from top to bottom, with people standing in the corridors and in the aisles, fighting to withdraw a head from some hole where they had inserted it, or to shove an eye between a collar and an ear. The open boxes, occupied for the most part by ladies, looked like baskets of flowers, whose petals—the fans—shook in a light breeze, wherein hummed a thousand bees. However, just as there are flowers of strong or delicate fragrance, flowers that kill and flowers that console, so from our baskets were exhaled like emanations: there were to be heard dialogues, conversations, remarks that bit and stung. Three or four boxes, however, were still vacant, in spite of the lateness of the hour. The performance had been advertised for half-past eight and it was already a quarter to nine, but the curtain did not go up, as his Excellency had not yet arrived. The gallery-gods, impatient and uncomfortable in their seats, started a racket, clapping their hands and pounding the floor with their canes.

“Boom—boom—boom! Ring up the curtain! Boom—boom—boom!”

The artillerymen were not the least noisy. Emulators of Mars, as Ben-Zayb called them, they were not satisfied with this music; thinking themselves perhaps at a bullfight, they made remarks at the ladies who passed before them in words that are euphemistically called flowers in Madrid, although at times they seem more like foul weeds. Without heeding the furious looks of the husbands, they[211]bandied from one to another the sentiments and longings inspired by so many beauties.

In the reserved seats, where the ladies seemed to be afraid to venture, as few were to be seen there, a murmur of voices prevailed amid suppressed laughter and clouds of tobacco smoke. They discussed the merits of the players and talked scandal, wondering if his Excellency had quarreled with the friars, if his presence at such a show was a defiance or mere curiosity. Others gave no heed to these matters, but were engaged in attracting the attention of the ladies, throwing themselves into attitudes more or less interesting and statuesque, flashing diamond rings, especially when they thought themselves the foci of insistent opera-glasses, while yet another would address a respectful salute to this or that señora or señorita, at the same time lowering his head gravely

to whisper to a neighbor, “How ridiculous she is! And such a bore!”

The lady would respond with one of her most gracious smiles and an enchanting nod of her head, while murmuring to a friend sitting near, amid lazy flourishes of her fan, “How impudent he is! He’s madly in love, my dear.”

Meanwhile, the noise increased. There remained only two vacant boxes, besides that of his Excellency, which was distinguished by its curtains of red velvet. The orchestra played another waltz, the audience protested, when fortunately there arose a charitable hero to distract their attention and relieve the manager, in the person of a man who had occupied a reserved seat and refused to give it up to its owner, the philosopher Don Primitivo. Finding his own arguments useless, Don Primitivo had appealed to an usher. “I don’t care to,” the hero responded to the latter’s protests, placidly puffing at his cigarette. The usher appealed to the manager. “I don’t care to,” was the response, as he settled back in the seat. The manager went away, while the artillerymen in the gallery began to sing out encouragement to the usurper.

Our hero, now that he had attracted general attention, [212]thought that to yield would be to lower himself, so he held on to the seat, while he repeated his answer to a pair of guards the manager had called in. These, in consideration of the rebel's rank, went in search of their corporal, while the whole house broke out into applause at the firmness of the hero, who remained seated like a Roman senator.

Hisses were heard, and the inflexible gentleman turned angrily to see if they were meant for him, but the galloping of horses resounded and the stir increased. One might have said that a revolution had broken out, or at least a riot, but no, the orchestra had suspended the waltz and was playing the royal march: it was his Excellency, the Captain-General and Governor of the islands, who was entering. All eyes sought and followed him, then lost sight of him, until he finally appeared in his box. After looking all about him and making some persons happy with a lordly salute, he sat down, as though he were indeed the man for whom the chair was waiting. The artillerymen then became silent and the orchestra tore into the prelude.

Our students occupied a box directly facing that of Pepay, the dancing girl. Her box was a present from

Makaraig, who had already got on good terms with her in order to propitiate Don Custodio. Pepay had that very afternoon written a note to the illustrious arbiter, asking for an answer and appointing an interview in the theater. For this reason, Don Custodio, in spite of the active opposition he had manifested toward the French operetta, had gone to the theater, which action won him some caustic remarks on the part of Don Manuel, his ancient adversary in the sessions of the Ayuntamiento.

“I’ve come to judge the operetta,” he had replied in the tone of a Cato whose conscience was clear.

So Makaraig was exchanging looks of intelligence with Pepay, who was giving him to understand that she had something to tell him. As the dancing girl’s face wore a happy expression, the students augured that a favorable outcome was assured. Sandoval, who had just returned [213]from making calls in other boxes, also assured them that the decision had been favorable, that that very afternoon the Superior Commission had considered and approved it. Every one was jubilant, even Pecson having laid aside his pessimism when he saw the smiling Pepay display a note. Sandoval and Makaraig congratulated one

another, Isagani alone remaining cold and unsmiling. What had happened to this young man?

Upon entering the theater, Isagani had caught sight of Paulita in a box, with Juanito Pelaez talking to her. He had turned pale, thinking that he must be mistaken. But no, it was she herself, she who greeted him with a gracious smile, while her beautiful eyes seemed to be asking pardon and promising explanations. The fact was that they had agreed upon Isagani's going first to the theater to see if the show contained anything improper for a young woman, but now he found her there, and in no other company than that of his rival. What passed in his mind is indescribable: wrath, jealousy, humiliation, resentment raged within him, and there were moments even when he wished that the theater would fall in; he had a violent desire to laugh aloud, to insult his sweetheart, to challenge his rival, to make a scene, but finally contented himself with sitting quiet and not looking at her at all. He was conscious of the beautiful plans Makaraig and Sandoval were making, but they sounded like distant echoes, while the notes of the waltz seemed sad and lugubrious, the whole audience stupid and foolish, and several times he had to make an effort to keep back the tears. Of the

trouble stirred up by the hero who refused to give up the seat, of the arrival of the Captain-General, he was scarcely conscious. He stared toward the drop-curtain, on which was depicted a kind of gallery with sumptuous red hangings, affording a view of a garden in which a fountain played, yet how sad the gallery looked to him and how melancholy the painted landscape! A thousand vague recollections surged into his memory like distant echoes of music heard in the night, [214]like songs of infancy, the murmur of lonely forests and gloomy rivulets, moonlit nights on the shore of the sea spread wide before his eyes. So the enamored youth considered himself very wretched and stared fixedly at the ceiling so that the tears should not fall from his eyes.

A burst of applause drew him from these meditations. The curtain had just risen, and the merry chorus of peasants of Corneville was presented, all dressed in cotton caps, with heavy wooden sabots on their feet. Some six or seven girls, well-rouged on the lips and cheeks, with large black circles around their eyes to increase their brilliance, displayed white arms, fingers covered with diamonds, round and shapely limbs. While they were chanting the Norman phrase "*Allez, marchez! Allez, marchez!*" they smiled at their

different admirers in the reserved seats with such openness that Don Custodio, after looking toward Pepay's box to assure himself that she was not doing the same thing with some other admirer, set down in his note-book this indecency, and to make sure of it lowered his head a little to see if the actresses were not showing their knees.

"Oh, these Frenchwomen!" he muttered, while his imagination lost itself in considerations somewhat more elevated, as he made comparisons and projects.

"*Quoi v'la tous les cancans d'la s'maine!*" sang Gertrude, a proud damsel, who was looking roguishly askance at the Captain-General.

"We're going to have the cancan!" exclaimed Tadeo, the winner of the first prize in the French class, who had managed to make out this word. "Makaraig, they're going to dance the cancan!"

He rubbed his hands gleefully. From the moment the curtain rose, Tadeo had been heedless of the music. He was looking only for the prurient, the indecent, the immoral in actions and dress, and with his scanty French was sharpening his ears to catch the obscenities that the austere guardians of the fatherland had foretold.

Sandoval, pretending to know French, had converted himself [215]into a kind of interpreter for his friends. He knew as much about it as Tadeo, but the published synopsis helped him and his fancy supplied the rest. “Yes,” he said, “they’re going to dance the cancan—she’s going to lead it.”

Makaraig and Pecson redoubled their attention, smiling in anticipation, while Isagani looked away, mortified to think that Paulita should be present at such a show and reflecting that it was his duty to challenge Juanito Pelaez the next day.

But the young men waited in vain. Serpolette came on, a charming girl, in her cotton cap, provoking and challenging. “*Hein, qui parle de Serpolette?*” she demanded of the gossips, with her arms akimbo in a combative attitude. Some one applauded, and after him all those in the reserved seats. Without changing her girlish attitude, Serpolette gazed at the person who had started the applause and paid him with a smile, displaying rows of little teeth that looked like a string of pearls in a case of red velvet.

Tadeo followed her gaze and saw a man in a false mustache with an extraordinarily large nose. “By the monk’s cowl!” he exclaimed. “It’s Irene!”

“Yes,” corroborated Sandoval, “I saw him behind the scenes talking with the actresses.”

The truth was that Padre Irene, who was a melomaniac of the first degree and knew French well, had been sent to the theater by Padre Salvi as a sort of religious detective, or so at least he told the persons who recognized him. As a faithful critic, who should not be satisfied with viewing the piece from a distance, he wished to examine the actresses at first hand, so he had mingled in the groups of admirers and gallants, had penetrated into the greenroom, where was whispered and talked a French required by the situation, a*market French*, a language that is readily comprehensible for the vender when the buyer seems disposed to pay well.[216]

Serpolette was surrounded by two gallant officers, a sailor, and a lawyer, when she caught sight of him moving about, sticking the tip of his long nose into all the nooks and corners, as though with it he were ferreting out all the mysteries of the stage. She ceased her chatter, knitted her eyebrows, then raised them, opened her lips and with the vivacity of a *Parisienne* left her admirers to hurl herself like a torpedo upon our critic.

"*Tiens, tiens, Toutou! Mon lapin!*" she cried, catching Padre Irene's arm and shaking it merrily, while the air rang with her silvery laugh.

"Tut, tut!" objected Padre Irene, endeavoring to conceal himself.

"*Mais, comment! Toi ici, grosse bête! Et moi qui t'croyais—*"

"*'Tais pas d'tapage, Lily! Il faut m'respecter! 'Suis ici l'Pape!*"

With great difficulty Padre Irene made her listen to reason, for Lily was *enchanteé* to meet in Manila an old friend who reminded her of the *coulisses* of the Grand Opera House. So it was that Padre Irene, fulfilling at the same time his duties as a friend and a critic, had initiated the applause to encourage her, for Serpolette deserved it.

Meanwhile, the young men were waiting for the cancan. Pecson became all eyes, but there was everything except cancan. There was presented the scene in which, but for the timely arrival of the representatives of the law, the women would have come to blows and torn one another's hair out, incited thereto by the mischievous peasants, who,

like our students, hoped to see something more than the cancan.

Scit, scit, scit, scit, scit, scit,
Disputez-vous, battez-vous,
Scit, scit, scit, scit, scit, scit,
Nous allons compter les coups.

The music ceased, the men went away, the women returned, a few at a time, and started a conversation among [217]themselves, of which our friends understood nothing. They were slandering some absent person.

“They look like the Chinamen of the *pansiteria!*” whispered Pecson.

“But, the cancan?” asked Makaraig.

“They’re talking about the most suitable place to dance it,” gravely responded Sandoval.

“They look like the Chinamen of the *pansiteria*,” repeated Pecson in disgust.

A lady accompanied by her husband entered at that moment and took her place in one of the two vacant boxes. She had the air of a queen and gazed disdainfully at the whole house, as if to say, “I’ve come later than all of you, you crowd of upstarts and

provincials, I've come later than you!" There are persons who go to the theater like the contestants in a mule-race: the last one in, wins, and we know very sensible men who would ascend the scaffold rather than enter a theater before the first act. But the lady's triumph was of short duration—she caught sight of the other box that was still empty, and began to scold her better half, thus starting such a disturbance that many were annoyed.

"Ssh! Ssh!"

"The blockheads! As if they understood French!" remarked the lady, gazing with supreme disdain in all directions, finally fixing her attention on Juanito's box, whence she thought she had heard an impudent hiss.

Juanito was in fact guilty, for he had been pretending to understand everything, holding himself up proudly and applauding at times as though nothing that was said escaped him, and this too without guiding himself by the actors' pantomime, because he scarcely looked toward the stage. The rogue had intentionally remarked to Paulita that, as there was so much more beautiful a woman close at hand, he did not care to strain his eyes looking beyond her. Paulita

had blushed, covered her face with her fan, and glanced stealthily toward where Isagani, silent and morose, was abstractedly watching the show.[218]

Paulita felt nettled and jealous. Would Isagani fall in love with any of those alluring actresses? The thought put her in a bad humor, so she scarcely heard the praises that Doña Victorina was heaping upon her own favorite.

Juanito was playing his part well: he shook his head at times in sign of disapproval, and then there could be heard coughs and murmurs in some parts, at other times he smiled in approbation, and a second later applause resounded. Doña Victorina was charmed, even conceiving some vague ideas of marrying the young man the day Don Tiburcio should die—Juanito knew French and De Espadaña didn't! Then she began to flatter him, nor did he perceive the change in the drift of her talk, so occupied was he in watching a Catalan merchant who was sitting next to the Swiss consul. Having observed that they were conversing in French, Juanito was getting his inspiration from their countenances, and thus grandly giving the cue to those about him.

Scene followed scene, character succeeded character, comic and ridiculous like the bailiff and Grenicheux, imposing and winsome like the marquis and Germaine. The audience laughed heartily at the slap delivered by Gaspard and intended for the coward Grenicheux, which was received by the grave bailiff, whose wig went flying through the air, producing disorder and confusion as the curtain dropped.

“Where’s the cancan?” inquired Tadeo.

But the curtain rose again immediately, revealing a scene in a servant market, with three posts on which were affixed signs bearing the announcements: *servantes*, *cochers*, and *domestiques*. Juanito, to improve the opportunity, turned to Doña Victorina and said in a loud voice, so that Paulita might hear and he convinced of his learning:

“*Servantes* means servants, *domestiques* domestics.”

“And in what way do the *servantes* differ from the *domestiques*?” asked Paulita.

Juanito was not found wanting. “*Domestiques* are those [219]that are domesticated—haven’t you noticed that some of them have the air of savages? Those are the *servantes*.”

“That’s right,” added Doña Victorina, “some have very bad manners—and yet I thought that in Europe everybody was cultivated. But as it happens in France,—well, I see!”

“Ssh! Ssh!”

But what was Juanito’s predicament when the time came for the opening of the market and the beginning of the sale, and the servants who were to be hired placed themselves beside the signs that indicated their class! The men, some ten or twelve rough characters in livery, carrying branches in their hands, took their place under the sign *domestiques*!

“Those are the domestics,” explained Juanito.

“Really, they have the appearance of being only recently domesticated,” observed Doña Victorina. “Now let’s have a look at the savages.”

Then the dozen girls headed by the lively and merry Serpolette, decked out in their best clothes, each wearing a big bouquet of flowers at the waist, laughing, smiling, fresh and attractive, placed themselves, to Juanito’s great desperation, beside the post of the *servantes*.

“How’s this?” asked Paulita guilelessly. “Are those the savages that you spoke of?”

“No,” replied the imperturbable Juanito, “there’s a mistake—they’ve got their places mixed—those coming behind—”

“Those with the whips?”

Juanito nodded assent, but he was rather perplexed and uneasy.

“So those girls are the *cochers*?”

Here Juanito was attacked by such a violent fit of coughing that some of the spectators became annoyed.

“Put him out! Put the consumptive out!” called a voice.

Consumptive! To be called a consumptive before Paulita! Juanito wanted to find the blackguard and make [220]him swallow that “consumptive.” Observing that the women were trying to hold him back, his bravado increased, and he became more conspicuously ferocious. But fortunately it was Don Custodio who had made the diagnosis, and he, fearful of attracting attention to himself, pretended to hear

nothing, apparently busy with his criticism of the play.

“If it weren’t that I am with you,” remarked Juanito, rolling his eyes like some dolls that are moved by clockwork, and to make the resemblance more real he stuck out his tongue occasionally.

Thus that night he acquired in Doña Victorina’s eyes the reputation of being brave and punctilious, so she decided in her heart that she would marry him just as soon as Don Tiburcio was out of the way. Paulita became sadder and sadder in thinking about how the girls called *cochers* could occupy Isagani’s attention, for the name had certain disagreeable associations that came from the slang of her convent school-days.

At length the first act was concluded, the marquis taking away as servants Serpolette and Germaine, the representative of timid beauty in the troupe, and for coachman the stupid Grenicheux. A burst of applause brought them out again holding hands, those who five seconds before had been tormenting one another and were about to come to blows, bowing and smiling here and there to the gallant Manila public and exchanging knowing looks with various spectators.

While there prevailed the passing tumult occasioned by those who crowded one another to get into the greenroom and felicitate the actresses and by those who were going to make calls on the ladies in the boxes, some expressed their opinions of the play and the players.

“Undoubtedly, Serpolette is the best,” said one with a knowing air.

“I prefer Germaine, she’s an ideal blonde.”

“But she hasn’t any voice.”[221]

“What do I care about the voice?”

“Well, for shape, the tall one.”

“Pshaw,” said Ben-Zayb, “not a one is worth a straw, not a one is an artist!”

Ben-Zayb was the critic for *El Grito de la Integridad*, and his disdainful air gave him great importance in the eyes of those who were satisfied with so little.

“Serpolette hasn’t any voice, nor Germaine grace, nor is that music, nor is it art, nor is it anything!” he concluded with marked contempt. To set oneself up as a great critic there is nothing like appearing to be discontented with everything. Besides, the

management had sent only two seats for the newspaper staff.

In the boxes curiosity was aroused as to who could be the possessor of the empty one, for that person, would surpass every one in chic, since he would be the last to arrive. The rumor started somewhere that it belonged to Simoun, and was confirmed: no one had seen the jeweler in the reserved seats, the greenroom, or anywhere else.

“Yet I saw him this afternoon with Mr. Jouay,” some one said. “He presented a necklace to one of the actresses.”

“To which one?” asked some of the inquisitive ladies.

“To the finest of all, the one who made eyes at his Excellency.”

This information was received with looks of intelligence, winks, exclamations of doubt, of confirmation, and half-uttered commentaries.

“He’s trying to play the Monte Cristo,” remarked a lady who prided herself on being literary.

“Or purveyor to the Palace!” added her escort, jealous of Simoun.

In the students' box, Pecson, Sandoval, and Isagani had remained, while Tadeo had gone to engage Don Custodio in conversation about his projects, and Makaraig to hold an interview with Pepay.

"In no way, as I have observed to you before, friend [222]Isagani," declared Sandoval with violent gestures and a sonorous voice, so that the ladies near the box, the daughters of the rich man who was in debt to Tadeo, might hear him, "in no way does the French language possess the rich sonorousness or the varied and elegant cadence of the Castilian tongue. I cannot conceive, I cannot imagine, I cannot form any idea of French orators, and I doubt that they have ever had any or can have any now in the strict construction of the term orator, because we must not confuse the name orator with the words babbler and charlatan, for these can exist in any country, in all the regions of the inhabited world, among the cold and curt Englishmen as among the lively and impressionable Frenchmen."

Thus he delivered a magnificent review of the nations, with his poetical characterizations and most resounding epithets. Isagani nodded assent, with his thoughts fixed on Paulita, whom he had surprised gazing at him with an expressive look which

contained a wealth of meaning. He tried to divine what those eyes were expressing—those eyes that were so eloquent and not at all deceptive.

“Now you who are a poet, a slave to rhyme and meter, a son of the Muses,” continued Sandoval, with an elegant wave of his hand, as though he were saluting, on the horizon, the Nine Sisters, “do you comprehend, can you conceive, how a language so harsh and unmusical as French can give birth to poets of such gigantic stature as our Garcilasos, our Herreras, our Espronceda, our Calderons?”

“Nevertheless,” objected Pecson, “Victor Hugo—”

“Victor Hugo, my friend Pecson, if Victor Hugo is a poet, it is because he owes it to Spain, because it is an established fact, it is a matter beyond all doubt, a thing admitted even by the Frenchmen themselves, so envious of Spain, that if Victor Hugo has genius, if he really is a poet, it is because his childhood was spent in Madrid; there he drank in his first impressions, there his brain was molded, there his imagination was colored, his heart modeled, and the most beautiful concepts of his mind born. [223]And after all, who is Victor Hugo? Is he to be compared at all with our modern—”

This peroration was cut short by the return of Makaraig with a despondent air and a bitter smile on his lips, carrying in his hand a note, which he offered silently to Sandoval, who read:

"MY DOVE: Your letter has reached me late, for I have already handed in my decision, and it has been approved. However, as if I had guessed your wish, I have decided the matter according to the desires of your protégés. I'll be at the theater and wait for you after the performance.

"Your duckling,

"CUSTODINING."

"How tender the man is!" exclaimed Tadeo with emotion.

"Well?" said Sandoval. "I don't see anything wrong about this—quite the reverse!"

"Yes," rejoined Makaraig with his bitter smile, "decided favorably! I've just seen Padre Irene."

"What does Padre Irene say?" inquired Pecson.

"The same as Don Custodio, and the rascal still had the audacity to congratulate me. The Commission, which has taken as its own the decision of the arbiter, approves the idea and felicitates the students on their patriotism and their thirst for knowledge—"

"Well?"

"Only that, considering our duties—in short, it says that in order that the idea may not be lost, it

concludes that the direction and execution of the plan should be placed in charge of one of the religious corporations, in case the Dominicans do not wish to incorporate the academy with the University."

Exclamations of disappointment greeted the announcement. Isagani rose, but said nothing.

"And in order that we may participate in the management of the academy," Makaraig went on, "we are intrusted with the collection of contributions and dues, with [224]the obligation of turning them over to the treasurer whom the corporation may designate, which treasurer will issue us receipts."

"Then we're tax-collectors!" remarked Tadeo.

"Sandoval," said Pecson, "there's the gauntlet—take it up!"

"Huh! That's not a gauntlet—from its odor it seems more like a sock."

"The funniest, part of it," Makaraig added, "is that Padre Irene has advised us to celebrate the event with a banquet or a torchlight procession—a public demonstration of the students *en masse* to render thanks to all the persons who have intervened in the affair."

“Yes, after the blow, let’s sing and give thanks. *Super flumina Babylonis sedimus*!”

“Yes, a banquet like that of the convicts,” said Tadeo.

“A banquet at which we all wear mourning and deliver funeral orations,” added Sandoval.

“A serenade with the Marseillaise and funeral marches,” proposed Isagani.

“No, gentlemen,” observed Pecson with his clownish grin, “to celebrate the event there’s nothing like a banquet in a *pansitería*, served by the Chinamen without camisas. I insist, without camisas!”

The sarcasm and grotesqueness of this idea won it ready acceptance, Sandoval being the first to applaud it, for he had long wished to see the interior of one of those establishments which at night appeared to be so merry and cheerful.

Just as the orchestra struck up for the second act, the young men arose and left the theater, to the scandal of the whole house.[225]

A Corpse

Simoun had not, in fact, gone to the theater. Already, at seven o'clock in the evening, he had left his house looking worried and gloomy. His servants saw him return twice, accompanied by different individuals, and at eight o'clock Makaraig encountered him pacing along Calle Hospital near the nunnery of St. Clara, just when the bells of its church were ringing a funeral knell. At nine Camaroncocido saw him again, in the neighborhood of the theater, speak with a person who seemed to be a student, pay the latter's admission to the show, and again disappear among the shadows of the trees.

"What is it to me?" again muttered Camaroncocido. "What do I get out of watching over the populace?"

Basilio, as Makaraig said, had not gone to the show. The poor student, after returning from San Diego, whither he had gone to ransom Juli, his future bride, from her servitude, had turned again to his studies, spending his time in the hospital, in studying, or in nursing Capitan Tiago, whose affliction he was trying to cure.

The invalid had become an intolerable character. During his bad spells, when he felt depressed from

lack of opium, the doses of which Basilio was trying to reduce, he would scold, mistreat, and abuse the boy, who bore it resignedly, conscious that he was doing good to one to whom he owed so much, and yielded only in the last extremity. His vicious appetite satisfied, Capitan Tiago would fall into a good humor, become tender, and call him his son, tearfully recalling the youth's services, how well he administered the estates, and would even talk of making [226]him his heir. Basilio would smile bitterly and reflect that in this world complaisance with vice is rewarded better than fulfilment of duty. Not a few times did he feel tempted to give free rein to the craving and conduct his benefactor to the grave by a path of flowers and smiling illusions rather than lengthen his life along a road of sacrifice.

"What a fool I am!" he often said to himself. "People are stupid and then pay for it."

But he would shake his head as he thought of Juli, of the wide future before him. He counted upon living without a stain on his conscience, so he continued the treatment prescribed, and bore everything patiently.

Yet with all his care the sick man, except for short periods of improvement, grew worse. Basilio had

planned gradually to reduce the amount of the dose, or at least not to let him injure himself by increasing it, but on returning from the hospital or some visit he would find his patient in the heavy slumber produced by the opium, driveling, pale as a corpse. The young man could not explain whence the drug came: the only two persons who visited the house were Simoun and Padre Irene, the former rarely, while the latter never ceased exhorting him to be severe and inexorable with the treatment, to take no notice of the invalid's ravings, for the main object was to save him.

"Do your duty, young man," was Padre Irene's constant admonition. "Do your duty." Then he would deliver a sermon on this topic with such great conviction and enthusiasm that Basilio would begin to feel kindly toward the preacher. Besides, Padre Irene promised to get him a fine assignment, a good province, and even hinted at the possibility of having him appointed a professor. Without being carried away by illusions, Basilio pretended to believe in them and went on obeying the dictates of his own conscience.

That night, while *Les Cloches de Corneville* was being presented, Basilio was studying at an old table

by the light [227]of an oil-lamp, whose thick glass globe partly illuminated his melancholy features. An old skull, some human bones, and a few books carefully arranged covered the table, whereon there was also a pan of water with a sponge. The smell of opium that proceeded from the adjoining bedroom made the air heavy and inclined him to sleep, but he overcame the desire by bathing his temples and eyes from time to time, determined not to go to sleep until he had finished the book, which he had borrowed and must return as soon as possible. It was a volume of the *Medicina Legal y Toxicología* of Dr. Friata, the only book that the professor would use, and Basilio lacked money to buy a copy, since, under the pretext of its being forbidden by the censor in Manila and the necessity for bribing many government employees to get it in, the booksellers charged a high price for it.

So absorbed wras the youth in his studies that he had not given any attention at all to some pamphlets that had been sent to him from some unknown source, pamphlets that treated of the Philippines, among which figured those that were attracting the greatest notice at the time because of their harsh and insulting manner of referring to the natives of the country. Basilio had no time to open them, and he was

perhaps restrained also by the thought that there is nothing pleasant about receiving an insult or a provocation without having any means of replying or defending oneself. The censorship, in fact, permitted insults to the Filipinos but prohibited replies on their part.

In the midst of the silence that reigned in the house, broken only by a feeble snore that issued now and then from the adjoining bedroom, Basilio heard light footfalls on the stairs, footfalls that soon crossed the hallway and approached the room where he was. Raising his head, he saw the door open and to his great surprise appeared the sinister figure of the jeweler Simoun, who since the scene in San Diego had not come to visit either himself or Capitan Tiago.

“How is the sick man?” he inquired, throwing a rapid [228]glance about the room and fixing his attention on the pamphlets, the leaves of which were still uncut.

“The beating of his heart is scarcely perceptible, his pulse is very weak, his appetite entirely gone,” replied Basilio in a low voice with a sad smile. “He sweats profusely in the early morning.”

Noticing that Simoun kept his face turned toward the pamphlets and fearing that he might reopen the subject of their conversation in the wood, he went on: “His system is saturated with poison. He may die any day, as though struck by lightning. The least irritation, any excitement may kill him.”

“Like the Philippines!” observed Simoun lugubriously.

Basilio was unable to refrain from a gesture of impatience, but he was determined not to recur to the old subject, so he proceeded as if he had heard nothing: “What weakens him the most is the nightmares, his terrors—”

“Like the government!” again interrupted Simoun.

“Several nights ago he awoke in the dark and thought that he had gone blind. He raised a disturbance, lamenting and scolding me, saying that I had put his eyes out. When I entered his room with a light he mistook me for Padre Irene and called me his saviour.”

“Like the government, exactly!”

“Last night,” continued Basilio, paying no attention, “he got up begging for his favorite game-cock, the

one that died three years ago, and I had to give him a chicken. Then he heaped blessings upon me and promised me many thousands—”

At that instant a clock struck half-past ten. Simoun shuddered and stopped the youth with a gesture.

“Basilio,” he said in a low, tense voice, “listen to me carefully, for the moments are precious. I see that you haven’t opened the pamphlets that I sent you. You’re not interested in your country.”

The youth started to protest.

“It’s useless,” went on Simoun dryly. “Within an [229]hour the revolution is going to break out at a signal from me, and tomorrow there’ll be no studies, there’ll be no University, there’ll be nothing but fighting and butchery. I have everything ready and my success is assured. When we triumph, all those who could have helped us and did not do so will be treated as enemies. Basilio, I’ve come to offer you death or a future!”

“Death or a future!” the boy echoed, as though he did not understand.

“With us or with the government,” rejoined Simoun. “With your country or with your oppressors. Decide,

for time presses! I've come to save you because of the memories that unite us!"

"With my country or with the oppressors!" repeated Basilio in a low tone. The youth was stupefied. He gazed at the jeweler with eyes in which terror was reflected, he felt his limbs turn cold, while a thousand confused ideas whirled about in his mind. He saw the streets running blood, he heard the firing, he found himself among the dead and wounded, and by the peculiar force of his inclinations fancied himself in an operator's blouse, cutting off legs and extracting bullets.

"The will of the government is in my hands," said Simoun. "I've diverted and wasted its feeble strength and resources on foolish expeditions, dazzling it with the plunder it might seize. Its heads are now in the theater, calm and unsuspecting, thinking of a night of pleasure, but not one shall again repose upon a pillow. I have men and regiments at my disposition: some I have led to believe that the uprising is ordered by the General; others that the friars are bringing it about; some I have bought with promises, with employments, with money; many, very many, are acting from revenge, because they are oppressed and see it as a matter of killing or being killed. Cabesang

Tales is below, he has come with me here! Again I ask you—will you come with us or do you prefer to expose yourself to the resentment of my followers? In critical moments, [230]to declare oneself neutral is to be exposed to the wrath of both the contending parties."

Basilio rubbed his hand over his face several times, as if he were trying to wake from a nightmare. He felt that his brow was cold.

"Decide!" repeated Simoun.

"And what—what would I have to do?" asked the youth in a weak and broken voice.

"A very simple thing," replied Simoun, his face lighting up with a ray of hope. "As I have to direct the movement, I cannot get away from the scene of action. I want you, while the attention of the whole city is directed elsewhere, at the head of a company to force the doors of the nunnery of St. Clara and take from there a person whom only you, besides myself and Capitan Tiago, can recognize. You'll run no risk at all."

"Maria Clara!" exclaimed Basilio.

“Yes, Maria Clara,” repeated Simoun, and for the first time his voice became human and compassionate. “I want to save her; to save her I have wished to live, I have returned. I am starting the revolution, because only a revolution can open the doors of the nunneries.”

“Ay!” sighed Basilio, clasping his hands. “You’ve come late, too late!”

“Why?” inquired Simoun with a frown.

“Maria Clara is dead!”

Simoun arose with a bound and stood over the youth. “She’s dead?” he demanded in a terrible voice.

“This afternoon, at six. By now she must be—”

“It’s a lie!” roared Simoun, pale and beside himself. “It’s false! Maria Clara lives, Maria Clara must live! It’s a cowardly excuse! She’s not dead, and this night I’ll free her or tomorrow you die!”

Basilio shrugged his shoulders. “Several days ago she was taken ill and I went to the nunnery for news of her. Look, here is Padre Salvi’s letter, brought by Padre Irene. Capitan Tiago wept all the evening, kissing his daughter’s [231]picture and begging her forgiveness, until at last he smoked an enormous

quantity of opium. This evening her knell was tolled."

"Ah!" exclaimed Simoun, pressing his hands to his head and standing motionless. He remembered to have actually heard the knell while he was pacing about in the vicinity of the nunnery.

"Dead!" he murmured in a voice so low that it seemed to be a ghost whispering. "Dead! Dead without my having seen her, dead without knowing that I lived for her—dead!"

Feeling a terrible storm, a tempest of whirlwind and thunder without a drop of water, sobs without tears, cries without words, rage in his breast and threaten to burst out like burning lava long repressed, he rushed precipitately from the room. Basilio heard him descend the stairs with unsteady tread, stepping heavily, he heard a stifled cry, a cry that seemed to presage death, so solemn, deep, and sad that he arose from his chair pale and trembling, but he could hear the footsteps die away and the noisy closing of the door to the street.

"Poor fellow!" he murmured, while his eyes filled with tears. Heedless now of his studies, he let his gaze wander into space as he pondered over the fate

of those two beings: he—young, rich, educated, master of his fortunes, with a brilliant future before him; she—fair as a dream, pure, full of faith and innocence, nurtured amid love and laughter, destined to a happy existence, to be adored in the family and respected in the world; and yet of those two beings, filled with love, with illusions and hopes, by a fatal destiny he wandered over the world, dragged ceaselessly through a whirl of blood and tears, sowing evil instead of doing good, undoing virtue and encouraging vice, while she was dying in the mysterious shadows of the cloister where she had sought peace and perhaps found suffering, where she entered pure and stainless and expired like a crushed flower![232]

Sleep in peace, ill-starred daughter of my hapless fatherland! Bury in the grave the enchantments of youth, faded in their prime! When a people cannot offer its daughters a tranquil home under the protection of sacred liberty, when a man can only leave to his widow blushes, tears to his mother, and slavery to his children, you do well to condemn yourself to perpetual chastity, stifling within you the germ of a future generation accursed! Well for you that you have not to shudder in your grave, hearing

the cries of those who groan in darkness, of those who feel that they have wings and yet are fettered, of those who are stifled from lack of liberty! Go, go with your poet's dreams into the regions of the infinite, spirit of woman dim-shadowed in the moonlight's beam, whispered in the bending arches of the bamboo-brakes! Happy she who dies lamented, she who leaves in the heart that loves her a pure picture, a sacred remembrance, unspotted by the base passions engendered by the years! Go, we shall remember you! In the clear air of our native land, under its azure sky, above the billows of the lake set amid sapphire hills and emerald shores, in the crystal streams shaded by the bamboos, bordered by flowers, enlivened by the beetles and butterflies with their uncertain and wavering flight as though playing with the air, in the silence of our forests, in the singing of our rivers, in the diamond showers of our waterfalls, in the resplendent light of our moon, in the sighs of the night breeze, in all that may call up the vision of the beloved, we must eternally see you as we dreamed of you, fair, beautiful, radiant with hope, pure as the light, yet still sad and melancholy in the contemplation of our woes![233]

Dreams

Amor, qué astro eres?

On the following day, Thursday, at the hour of sunset, Isagani was walking along the beautiful promenade of Maria Cristina in the direction of the Malecon to keep an appointment which Paulita had that morning given him. The young man had no doubt that they were to talk about what had happened on the previous night, and as he was determined to ask for an explanation, and knew how proud and haughty she was, he foresaw an estrangement. In view of this eventuality he had brought with him the only two letters he had ever received from Paulita, two scraps of paper, whereon were merely a few hurriedly written lines with various blots, but in an even handwriting, things that did not prevent the enamored youth from preserving them with more solicitude than if they had been the autographs of Sappho and the Muse Polyhymnia.

This decision to sacrifice his love on the altar of dignity, the consciousness of suffering in the discharge of duty, did not prevent a profound melancholy from taking possession of Isagani and brought back into his mind the beautiful days, and nights more beautiful still, when they had whispered

sweet nothings through the flowered gratings of the entresol, nothings that to the youth took on such a character of seriousness and importance that they seemed to him the only matters worthy of meriting the attention of the most exalted human understanding. He recalled the walks on moonlit nights, the fair, the dark December mornings after the mass of Nativity, the holy water that he used to offer her, when she would thank him with a look charged [234]with a whole epic of love, both of them trembling as their fingers touched. Heavy sighs, like small rockets, issued from his breast and brought back to him all the verses, all the sayings of poets and writers about the inconstancy of woman. Inwardly he cursed the creation of theaters, the French operetta, and vowed to get revenge on Pelaez at the first opportunity. Everything about him appeared under the saddest and somberest colors: the bay, deserted and solitary, seemed more solitary still on account of the few steamers that were anchored in it; the sun was dying behind Mariveles without poetry or enchantment, without the capricious and richly tinted clouds of happier evenings; the Anda monument, in bad taste, mean and squat, without style, without grandeur, looked like a lump of ice-cream or at best a chunk of cake; the people who were promenading

along the Malecon, in spite of their complacent and contented air, appeared distant, haughty, and vain; mischievous and bad-mannered, the boys that played on the beach, skipping flat stones over the surface of the water or searching in the sand for mollusks and crustaceans which they caught for the mere fun of catching and killed without benefit to themselves; in short, even the eternal port works to which he had dedicated more than three odes, looked to him absurd, ridiculous child's play.

The port, ah, the port of Manila, a bastard that since its conception had brought tears of humiliation and shame to all! If only after so many tears there were not being brought forth a useless abortion!

Abstractedly he saluted two Jesuits, former teachers of his, and scarcely noticed a tandem in which an American rode and excited the envy of the gallants who were in calesas only. Near the Anda monument he heard Ben-Zayb talking with another person about Simoun, learning that the latter had on the previous night been taken suddenly ill, that he refused to see any one, even the very aides of the General. "Yes!" exclaimed Isagani with a bitter smile, "for him attentions because he is rich. The soldiers

return [235]from their expeditions sick and wounded, but no one visits them.”

Musing over these expeditions, over the fate of the poor soldiers, over the resistance offered by the islanders to the foreign yoke, he thought that, death for death, if that of the soldiers was glorious because they were obeying orders, that of the islanders was sublime because they were defending their homes.[1]

“A strange destiny, that of some peoples!” he mused. “Because a traveler arrives at their shores, they lose their liberty and become subjects and slaves, not only of the traveler, not only of his heirs, but even of all his countrymen, and not for a generation, but for all time! A strange conception of justice! Such a state of affairs gives ample right to exterminate every foreigner as the most ferocious monster that the sea can cast up!”

He reflected that those islanders, against whom his country was waging war, after all were guilty of no crime other than that of weakness. The travelers also arrived at the shores of other peoples, but finding them strong made no display of their strange pretension. With all their weakness the spectacle they presented seemed beautiful to him, and the names of

the enemies, whom the newspapers did not fail to call cowards and traitors, appeared glorious to him, as they succumbed with glory amid the ruins of their crude fortifications, with greater glory even than the ancient Trojan heroes, for those islanders had carried away no Philippine Helen! In his poetic enthusiasm he thought of the young men of those islands who could cover themselves with glory in the eyes of their women, and in his amorous desperation he envied them because they could find a brilliant suicide.[236]

"Ah, I should like to die," he exclaimed, "be reduced to nothingness, leave to my native land a glorious name, perish in its cause, defending it from foreign invasion, and then let the sun afterwards illumine my corpse, like a motionless sentinel on the rocks of the sea!"

The conflict with the Germans[2] came into his mind and he almost felt sorry that it had been adjusted: he would gladly have died for the Spanish-Filipino banner before submitting to the foreigner.

"Because, after all," he mused, "with Spain we are united by firm bonds—the past, history, religion, language—"

Language, yes, language! A sarcastic smile curled his lips. That very night they would hold a banquet in the *pansitería* to *celebrate*the demise of the academy of Castilian.

“Ay!” he sighed, “provided the liberals in Spain are like those we have here, in a little while the mother country will be able to count the number of the faithful!”

Slowly the night descended, and with it melancholy settled more heavily upon the heart of the young man, who had almost lost hope of seeing Paulita. The promenaders one by one left the Malecon for the Luneta, the music from which was borne to him in snatches of melodies on the fresh evening breeze; the sailors on a warship anchored in the river performed their evening drill, skipping about among the slender ropes like spiders; the boats one by one lighted their lamps, thus giving signs of life; while the beach,

> Do el viento riza las calladas olas
> Que con blando murmullo en la ribera
> Se deslizan veloces por sí solas.[3]

[237]

as Alaejos says, exhaled in the distance thin, vapors that the moon, now at its full, gradually converted into mysterious transparent gauze.

A distant sound became audible, a noise that rapidly approached. Isagani turned his head and his heart began to beat violently. A carriage was coming, drawn by white horses, the white horses that he would know among a hundred thousand. In the carriage rode Paulita and her friend of the night before, with Doña Victorina.

Before the young man could take a step, Paulita had leaped to the ground with sylph-like agility and smiled at him with a smile full of conciliation. He smiled in return, and it seemed to him that all the clouds, all the black thoughts that before had beset him, vanished like smoke, the sky lighted up, the breeze sang, flowers covered the grass by the roadside. But unfortunately Doña Victorina was there and she pounced upon the young man to ask him for news of Don Tiburcio, since Isagani had undertaken to discover his hiding-place by inquiry among the students he knew.

“No one has been able to tell me up to now,” he answered, and he was telling the truth, for Don Tiburcio was really hidden in the house of the youth’s own uncle, Padre Florentino.

“Let him know,” declared Doña Victorina furiously, “that I’ll call in the Civil Guard. Alive or dead, I want to know where he is—because one has to wait ten years before marrying again.”

Isagani gazed at her in fright—Doña Victorina was thinking of remarrying! Who could the unfortunate be?

“What do you think of Juanito Pelaez?” she asked him suddenly.

Juanito! Isagani knew not what to reply. He was tempted to tell all the evil he knew of Pelaez, but a feeling of delicacy triumphed in his heart and he spoke well of his rival, for the very reason that he was such. Doña Victorina, entirely satisfied and becoming enthusiastic, then [238]broke out into exaggerations of Pelaez’s merits and was already going to make Isagani a confidant of her new passion when Paulita’s friend came running to say that the former’s fan had fallen among the stones of the beach, near the Malecon. Stratagem or accident, the fact is that this mischance gave an excuse for the friend to remain with the old woman, while Isagani might talk with Paulita. Moreover, it was a matter of

rejoicing to Doña Victorina, since to get Juanito for herself she was favoring Isagani's love.

Paulita had her plan ready. On thanking him she assumed the role of the offended party, showed resentment, and gave him to understand that she was surprised to meet him there when everybody was on the Luneta, even the French actresses.

"You made the appointment for me, how could I be elsewhere?"

"Yet last night you did not even notice that I was in the theater. I was watching you all the time and you never took your eyes off those *cochers*."

So they exchanged parts: Isagani, who had come to demand explanations, found himself compelled to give them and considered himself very happy when Paulita said that she forgave him. In regard to her presence at the theater, he even had to thank her for that: forced by her aunt, she had decided to go in the hope of seeing him during the performance. Little she cared for Juanito Pelaez!

"My aunt's the one who is in love with him," she said with a merry laugh.

Then they both laughed, for the marriage of Pelaez with Doña Victorina made them really happy, and they saw it already an accomplished fact, until Isagani remembered that Don Tiburcio was still living and confided the secret to his sweetheart, after exacting her promise that she would tell no one. Paulita promised, with the mental reservation of relating it to her friend.

This led the conversation to Isagani's town, surrounded [239]by forests, situated on the shore of the sea which roared at the base of the high cliffs. Isagani's gaze lighted up when he spoke of that obscure spot, a flush of pride overspread his cheeks, his voice trembled, his poetic imagination glowed, his words poured forth burning, charged with enthusiasm, as if he were talking of love to his love, and he could not but exclaim:

"Oh, in the solitude of my mountains I feel free, free as the air, as the light that shoots unbridled through space! A thousand cities, a thousand palaces, would I give for that spot in the Philippines, where, far from men, I could feel myself to have genuine liberty. There, face to face with nature, in the presence of the mysterious and the infinite, the forest and the sea, I

think, speak, and work like a man who knows not tyrants.”

In the presence of such enthusiasm for his native place, an enthusiasm that she did not comprehend, for she was accustomed to hear her country spoken ill of, and sometimes joined in the chorus herself, Paulita manifested some jealousy, as usual making herself the offended party.

But Isagani very quickly pacified her. “Yes,” he said, “I loved it above all things before I knew you! It was my delight to wander through the thickets, to sleep in the shade of the trees, to seat myself upon a cliff to take in with my gaze the Pacific which rolled its blue waves before me, bringing to me echoes of songs learned on the shores of free America. Before knowing you, that sea was for me my world, my delight, my love, my dream! When it slept in calm with the sun shining overhead, it was my delight to gaze into the abyss hundreds of feet below me, seeking monsters in the forests of madrepores and coral that were revealed through the limpid blue, enormous serpents that the country folk say leave the forests to dwell in the sea, and there take on frightful forms. Evening, they say, is the time when the sirens appear, and I saw them between the waves—so great

was my eagerness that once I thought I could discern them amid the foam, busy in their divine [240]sports, I distinctly heard their songs, songs of liberty, and I made out the sounds of their silvery harps. Formerly I spent hours and hours watching the transformations in the clouds, or gazing at a solitary tree in the plain or a high rock, without knowing why, without being able to explain the vague feelings they awoke in me. My uncle used to preach long sermons to me, and fearing that I would become a hypochondriac, talked of placing me under a doctor's care. But I met you, I loved you, and during the last vacation it seemed that something was lacking there, the forest was gloomy, sad the river that glides through the shadows, dreary the sea, deserted the sky. Ah, if you should go there once, if your feet should press those paths, if you should stir the waters of the rivulet with your fingers, if you should gaze upon the sea, sit upon the cliff, or make the air ring with your melodious songs, my forest would be transformed into an Eden, the ripples of the brook would sing, light would burst from the dark leaves, into diamonds would be converted the dewdrops and into pearls the foam of the sea."

But Paulita had heard that to reach Isagani's home it was necessary to cross mountains where little leeches

abounded, and at the mere thought of them the little coward shivered convulsively. Humored and petted, she declared that she would travel only in a carriage or a railway train.

Having now forgotten all his pessimism and seeing only thornless roses about him, Isagani answered, “Within a short time all the islands are going to be crossed with networks of iron rails.

> “‘Por donde rápidas
> Y voladoras
> Locomotoras
> Corriendo irán,’[4]

as some one said. Then the most beautiful spots of the islands will be accessible to all.”[241]

“Then, but when? When I’m an old woman?”

“Ah, you don’t know what we can do in a few years,” replied the youth. “You don’t realize the energy and enthusiasm that are awakening in the country after the sleep of centuries. Spain heeds us; our young men in Madrid are working day and night, dedicating to the fatherland all their intelligence, all their time, all their strength. Generous voices there are mingled with ours, statesmen who realize that there is no better bond than community of thought and interest.

Justice will be meted out to us, and everything points to a brilliant future for all. It's true that we've just met with a slight rebuff, we students, but victory is rolling along the whole line, it is in the consciousness of all! The traitorous repulse that we have suffered indicates the last gasp, the final convulsions of the dying. Tomorrow we shall be citizens of the Philippines, whose destiny will be a glorious one, because it will be in loving hands. Ah, yes, the future is ours! I see it rose-tinted, I see the movement that stirs the life of these regions so long dead, lethargic. I see towns arise along the railroads, and factories everywhere, edifices like that of Mandaloyan! I hear the steam hiss, the trains roar, the engines rattle! I see the smoke rise—their heavy breathing; I smell the oil —the sweat of monsters busy at incessant toil. This port, so slow and laborious of creation, this river where commerce is in its death agony, we shall see covered with masts, giving us an idea of the forests of Europe in winter. This pure air, and these stones, now so clean, will be crowded with coal, with boxes and barrels, the products of human industry, but let it not matter, for we shall move about rapidly in comfortable coaches to seek in the interior other air, other scenes on other shores, cooler temperatures on the slopes of the mountains. The warships of our

navy will guard our coasts, the Spaniard and the Filipino will rival each other in zeal to repel all foreign invasion, to defend our homes, and let you bask in peace and smiles, loved and respected. Free from the system of exploitation, [242]without hatred or distrust, the people will labor because then labor will cease to be a despicable thing, it will no longer be servile, imposed upon a slave. Then the Spaniard will not embitter his character with ridiculous pretensions of despotism, but with a frank look and a stout heart we shall extend our hands to one another, and commerce, industry, agriculture, the sciences, will develop under the mantle of liberty, with wise and just laws, as in prosperous England."[5]

Paulita smiled dubiously and shook her head. "Dreams, dreams!" she sighed. "I've heard it said that you have many enemies. Aunt says that this country must always be enslaved."

"Because your aunt is a fool, because she can't live without slaves! When she hasn't them she dreams of them in the future, and if they are not obtainable she forces them into her imagination. True it is that we have enemies, that there will be a struggle, but we shall conquer. The old system may convert the ruins of its castle into formless barricades, but we will take

them singing hymns of liberty, in the light of the eyes of you women, to the applause of your lovely hands. But do not be uneasy—the struggle will be a pacific one. Enough that you spur us to zeal, that you awake in us noble and elevated thoughts and encourage us [243]to constancy, to heroism, with your affection for our reward."

Paulita preserved her enigmatic smile and seemed thoughtful, as she gazed toward the river, patting her cheek lightly with her fan. "But if you accomplish nothing?" she asked abstractedly.

The question hurt Isagani. He fixed his eyes on his sweetheart, caught her lightly by the hand, and began: "Listen, if we accomplish nothing—"

He paused in doubt, then resumed: "You know how I love you, how I adore you, you know that I feel myself a different creature when your gaze enfolds me, when I surprise in it the flash of love, but yet if we accomplish nothing, I would dream of another look of yours and would die happy, because the light of pride could burn in your eyes when you pointed to my corpse and said to the world: 'My love died fighting for the rights of my fatherland!' "

“Come home, child, you’re going to catch cold,” screeched Doña Victorina at that instant, and the voice brought them back to reality. It was time to return, and they kindly invited him to enter the carriage, an invitation which the young man did not give them cause to repeat. As it was Paulita’s carriage, naturally Doña Victorina and the friend occupied the back seat, while the two lovers sat on the smaller one in front.

To ride in the same carriage, to have her at his side, to breathe her perfume, to rub against the silk of her dress, to see her pensive with folded arms, lighted by the moon of the Philippines that lends to the meanest things idealism and enchantment, were all dreams beyond Isagani’s hopes! What wretches they who were returning alone on foot and had to give way to the swift carriage! In the whole course of the drive, along the beach and down the length of La Sabana, across the Bridge of Spain, Isagani saw nothing but a sweet profile, gracefully set off by beautiful hair, ending in an arching neck that lost itself amid the gauzy piña. A diamond winked at him from the lobe of the [244]little ear, like a star among silvery clouds. He heard faint echoes inquiring for Don Tiburcio de Espadaña, the name of Juanito Pelaez, but they

sounded to him like distant bells, the confused noises heard in a dream. It was necessary to tell him that they had reached Plaza Santa Cruz.[245]

[1] Referring to the expeditions—*Misión Española Católica*—to the Caroline and Pelew Islands from 1886 to 1895, headed by the Capuchin Fathers, which brought misery and disaster upon the natives of those islands, unprofitable losses and sufferings to the Filipino soldiers engaged in them, discredit to Spain, and decorations of merit to a number of Spanish officers.—Tr.

[2] Over the possession of the Caroline and Pelew Islands. The expeditions referred to in the previous note were largely inspired by German activity with regard to those islands, which had always been claimed by Spain, who sold her claim to them to Germany after the loss of the Philippines.—Tr.

[3] "Where the wind wrinkles the silent waves, that rapidly break, of their own movement, with a gentle murmur on the shore."—Tr.

[4] "Where rapid and winged engines will rush in flight."—Tr.

[5] There is something almost uncanny about the general accuracy of the prophecy in these lines, the economic part of which is now so well on the way to realization, although the writer of them would doubtless have been a very much surprised individual had he also foreseen how it would come about. But one of his own expressions was "fire and steel to the cancer," and it surely got them.

On the very day that this passage was translated and this note written, the first commercial liner was tied up at the new docks, which have destroyed the Malecon but raised Manila to the front rank of Oriental seaports, and the final revision is made at Baguio, Mountain Province, amid the "cooler temperatures on the slopes of the mountains." As for the political portion, it is difficult even now to contemplate calmly the blundering fatuity of that bigoted medieval brand of "patriotism" which led the decrepit Philippine government to play the Ancient Mariner and shoot the Albatross that brought this message.—Tr.

Smiles and Tears

The sala of the *Pansiteria Macanista de Buen Gusto*[1] that night presented an extraordinary aspect. Fourteen young men of the principal islands of the archipelago, from the pure Indian (if there be pure ones) to the Peninsular Spaniard, were met to hold the banquet advised by Padre Irene in view of the happy solution of the affair about instruction in Castilian. They had engaged all the tables for themselves, ordered the lights to be increased, and had posted on the wall beside the landscapes and Chinese kakemonos this strange versicle:

"GLORY TO CUSTODIO FOR HIS CLEVERNESS AND PANSIT ON EABTH TO THE YOUTHS OF GOOD WILL."

In a country where everything grotesque is covered with a mantle of seriousness, where many rise by the force of wind and hot air, in a country where the deeply serious and sincere may do damage on issuing from the heart and may cause trouble, probably this was the best way to celebrate the ingenious inspiration of the illustrious Don Custodio. The mocked replied to the mockery with a laugh, to the governmental joke with a plate of *pansit*, and yet—!

They laughed and jested, but it could be seen that the merriment was forced. The laughter had a certain nervous ring, eyes flashed, and in more than one of these a tear glistened. Nevertheless, these young men were cruel, they were unreasonable! It was not the first time that their most [246]beautiful ideas had been so treated, that their hopes had been defrauded with big words and small actions: before this Don Custodio there had been many, very many others.

In the center of the room under the red lanterns were placed four round tables, systematically arranged to form a square. Little wooden stools, equally round, served as seats. In the middle of each table, according to the practise of the establishment, were arranged four small colored plates with four pies on each one and four cups of tea, with the accompanying dishes, all of red porcelain. Before each seat was a bottle and two glittering wine-glasses.

Sandoval was curious and gazed about scrutinizing everything, tasting the food, examining the pictures, reading the bill of fare. The others conversed on the topics of the day: about the French actresses, about the mysterious illness of Simoun, who, according to some, had been found wounded in the street, while others averred that he had attempted to commit

suicide. As was natural, all lost themselves in conjectures. Tadeo gave his particular version, which according to him came from a reliable source: Simoun had been assaulted by some unknown person in the old Plaza Vivac,[2] the motive being revenge, in proof of which was the fact that Simoun himself refused to make the least explanation. From this they proceeded to talk of mysterious revenges, and naturally of monkish pranks, each one relating the exploits of the curate of his town.

A notice in large black letters crowned the frieze of the room with this warning:

> De esta fonda el cabecilla
> Al publico advierte
> Que nada dejen absolutamente
> Sobre alguna mesa ó silla.[3]

[247]

“What a notice!” exclaimed Sandoval. “As if he might have confidence in the police, eh? And what verses! Don Tiburcio converted into a quatrain—two feet, one longer than the other, between two crutches! If Isagani sees them, he’ll present them to his future aunt.”

“Here’s Isagani!” called a voice from the stairway. The happy youth appeared radiant with joy, followed

by two Chinese, without camisas, who carried on enormous waiters tureens that gave out an appetizing odor. Merry exclamations greeted them.

Juanito Pelaez was missing, but the hour fixed had already passed, so they sat down happily to the tables. Juanito was always unconventional.

“If in his place we had invited Basilio,” said Tadeo, “we should have been better entertained. We might have got him drunk and drawn some secrets from him.”

“What, does the prudent Basilio possess secrets?”

“I should say so!” replied Tadeo. “Of the most important kind. There are some enigmas to which he alone has the key: the boy who disappeared, the nun __”

“Gentlemen, the *pansit lang-lang* is the soup *par excellence*!” cried Makaraig. “As you will observe, Sandoval, it is composed of vermicelli, crabs or shrimps, egg paste, scraps of chicken, and I don’t know what else. As first-fruits, let us offer the bones to Don Custodio, to see if he will project something with them.”

A burst of merry laughter greeted this sally.

“If he should learn—”

“He’d come a-running!” concluded Sandoval. “This is excellent soup—what is it called?”

“*Pansit lang-lang*, that is, Chinese *pansit*, to distinguish it from that which is peculiar to this country.”

“Bah! That’s a hard name to remember. In honor of Don Custodio, I christen it the *soup project*!”

“Gentlemen,” said Makaraig, who had prepared the menu, “there are three courses yet. Chinese stew made of pork—”[248]

“Which should be dedicated to Padre Irene.”

“Get out! Padre Irene doesn’t eat pork, unless he turns his nose away,” whispered a young man from Iloilo to his neighbor.

“Let him turn his nose away!”

“Down with Padre Irene’s nose,” cried several at once.

“Respect, gentlemen, more respect!” demanded Pecson with comic gravity.

“The third course is a lobster pie—”

“Which should be dedicated to the friars,” suggested he of the Visayas.

“For the lobsters’ sake,” added Sandoval.

“Right, and call it friar pie!”

The whole crowd took this up, repeating in concert, “Friar pie!”

“I protest in the name of one of them,” said Isagani.

“And I, in the name of the lobsters,” added Tadeo.

“Respect, gentlemen, more respect!” again demanded Pecson with a full mouth.

“The fourth is stewed *pansit*, which is dedicated—to the government and the country!”

All turned toward Makaraig, who went on: “Until recently, gentlemen, the *pansit* was believed to be Chinese or Japanese, but the fact is that, being unknown in China or Japan, it would seem to be Filipino, yet those who prepare it and get the benefit from it are the Chinese—the same, the very, very same that happens to the government and to the Philippines: they seem to be Chinese, but whether they are or not, the Holy Mother has her doctors—all eat and enjoy it, yet characterize it as disagreeable

and loathsome, the same as with the country, the same as with the government. All live at its cost, all share in its feast, and afterwards there is no worse country than the Philippines, there is no government more imperfect. Let us then dedicate the *pansit* to the country and to the government."

"Agreed!" many exclaimed.

"I protest!" cried Isagani.[249]

"Respect for the weaker, respect for the victims," called Pecson in a hollow voice, waving a chicken-bone in the air.

"Let's dedicate the *pansit* to Quiroga the Chinaman, one of the four powers of the Filipino world," proposed Isagani.

"No, to his Black Eminence."

"Silence!" cautioned one mysteriously. "There are people in the plaza watching us, and walls have ears."

True it was that curious groups were standing by the windows, while the talk and laughter in the adjoining houses had ceased altogether, as if the people there were giving their attention to what was occurring at

the banquet. There was something extraordinary about the silence.

“Tadeo, deliver your speech,” Makaraig whispered to him.

It had been agreed that Sandoval, who possessed the most oratorical ability, should deliver the last toast as a summing up.

Tadeo, lazy as ever, had prepared nothing, so he found himself in a quandary. While disposing of a long string of vermicelli, he meditated how to get out of the difficulty, until he recalled a speech learned in school and decided to plagiarize it, with adulterations.

“Beloved brethren in project!” he began, gesticulating with two Chinese chop-sticks.

“Brute! Keep that chop-stick out of my hair!” cried his neighbor.

“Called by you to fill the void that has been left in—”

“Plagiarism!” Sandoval interrupted him. “That speech was delivered by the president of our lyceum.”

“Called by your election,” continued the imperturbable Tadeo, “to fill the void that has been left in my mind”—pointing to his stomach—“by a man famous for his Christian principles and for his inspirations and projects, worthy of some little remembrance, what can one like myself say of him, I who am very hungry, not having breakfasted?”

“Have a neck, my friend!” called a neighbor, offering that portion of a chicken.[250]

“There is one course, gentlemen, the treasure of a people who are today a tale and a mockery in the world, wherein have thrust their hands the greatest gluttons of the western regions of the earth—” Here he pointed with his chopsticks to Sandoval, who was struggling with a refractory chicken-wing.

“And eastern!” retorted the latter, describing a circle in the air with his spoon, in order to include all the banqueters.

“No interruptions!”

“I demand the floor!”

“I demand pickles!” added Isagani.

“Bring on the stew!”

All echoed this request, so Tadeo sat down, contented with having got out of his quandary.

The dish consecrated to Padre Irene did not appear to be extra good, as Sandoval cruelly demonstrated thus: “Shining with grease outside and with pork inside! Bring on the third course, the friar pie!”

The pie was not yet ready, although the sizzling of the grease in the frying-pan could be heard. They took advantage of the delay to drink, begging Pecson to talk.

Pecson crossed himself gravely and arose, restraining his clownish laugh with an effort, at the same time mimicking a certain Augustinian preacher, then famous, and beginning in a murmur, as though he were reading a text.

“*Si tripa plena laudal Deum, tripa famelica laudabit fratres*—if the full stomach praises God, the hungry stomach will praise the friars. Words spoken by the Lord Custodio through the mouth of Ben-Zayb, in the journal *El Grito de la Integridad*, the second article, absurdity the one hundred and fifty-seventh.

“Beloved brethren in Christ: Evil blows its foul breath over the verdant shores of Frailandia, commonly called the Philippine Archipelago. No day

passes but the attack is renewed, but there is heard some sarcasm against the reverend, venerable, infallible corporations, defenseless and unsupported. [251]Allow me, brethren, on this occasion to constitute myself a knight-errant to sally forth in defense of the unprotected, of the holy corporations that have reared us, thus again confirming the saving idea of the adage—a full stomach praises God, which is to say, a hungry stomach will praise the friars."

"Bravo, bravo!"

"Listen," said Isagani seriously, "I want you to understand that, speaking of friars, I respect one."

Sandoval was getting merry, so he began to sing a shady couplet about the friars.

"Hear me, brethren!" continued Pecson. "Turn your gaze toward the happy days of your infancy, endeavor to analyze the present and ask yourselves about the future. What do you find? Friars, friars, and friars! A friar baptized you, confirmed you, visited you in school with loving zeal; a friar heard your first secret; he was the first to bring you into communion with God, to set your feet upon the pathway of life; friars were your first and friars will be your last teachers; a friar it is who opens the hearts of your

sweethearts, disposing them to heed your sighs; a friar marries you, makes you travel over different islands to afford you changes of climate and diversion; he will attend your death-bed, and even though you mount the scaffold, there will the friar be to accompany you with his prayers and tears, and you may rest assured that he will not desert you until he sees you thoroughly dead. Nor does his charity end there—dead, he will then endeavor to bury you with all pomp, he will fight that your corpse pass through the church to receive his supplications, and he will only rest satisfied when he can deliver you into the hands of the Creator, purified here on earth, thanks to temporal punishments, tortures, and humiliations. Learned in the doctrines of Christ, who closes heaven against the rich, they, our redeemers and genuine ministers of the Saviour, seek every means to lift away our sins and bear them far, far off, there where the accursed Chinese and Protestants [252]dwell, to leave us this air, limpid, pure, healthful, in such a way that even should we so wish afterwards, we could not find a real to bring about our condemnation.

“If, then, their existence is necessary to our happiness, if wheresoever we turn we must encounter

their delicate hands, hungering for kisses, that every day smooth the marks of abuse from our countenances, why not adore them and fatten them—why demand their impolitic expulsion? Consider for a moment the immense void that their absence would leave in our social system. Tireless workers, they improve and propagate the races! Divided as we are, thanks to our jealousies and our susceptibilities, the friars unite us in a common lot, in a firm bond, so firm that many are unable to move their elbows. Take away the friar, gentlemen, and you will see how the Philippine edifice will totter; lacking robust shoulders and hairy limbs to sustain it, Philippine life will again become monotonous, without the merry note of the playful and gracious friar, without the booklets and sermons that split our sides with laughter, without the amusing contrast between grand pretensions and small brains, without the actual, daily representations of the tales of Boccaccio and La Fontaine! Without the girdles and scapularies, what would you have our women do in the future—save that money and perhaps become miserly and covetous? Without the masses, novenaries, and processions, where will you find games of *panguingui* to entertain them in their hours of leisure? They would then have to devote themselves to their household duties and instead of

reading diverting stories of miracles, we should then have to get them works that are not extant.

“Take away the friar and heroism will disappear, the political virtues will fall under the control of the vulgar. Take him away and the Indian will cease to exist, for the friar is the Father, the Indian is the Word! The former is the sculptor, the latter the statue, because all that we are, think, or do, we owe to the friar—to his patience, his toil, his perseverance of three centuries to modify the form [253]Nature gave us. The Philippines without the friar and without the Indian—what then would become of the unfortunate government in the hands of the Chinamen?”

“It will eat lobster pie,” suggested Isagani, whom Pecson’s speech bored.

“And that’s what we ought to be doing. Enough of speeches!”

As the Chinese who should have served the courses did not put in his appearance, one of the students arose and went to the rear, toward the balcony that overlooked the river. But he returned at once, making mysterious signs.

“We’re watched! I’ve seen Padre Sibyla’s pet!”

“Yes?” ejaculated Isagani, rising.

“It’s no use now. When he saw me he disappeared.”

Approaching the window he looked toward the plaza, then made signs to his companions to come nearer. They saw a young man leave the door of the *pansitería*, gaze all about him, then with some unknown person enter a carriage that waited at the curb. It was Simoun’s carriage.

“Ah!” exclaimed Makaraig. “The slave of the Vice-Rector attended by the Master of the General!”[254]

[1] These establishments are still a notable feature of native life in Manila. Whether the author adopted a title already common or popularized one of his own invention, the fact is that they are now invariably known by the name used here. The use of *macanista* was due to the presence in Manila of a large number of Chinese from Macao.—Tr.

[2] Originally, Plaza San Gabriel, from the Dominican mission for the Chinese established there; later, as it became a commercial center, Plaza Vivac; and now known as Plaza Cervantes, being the financial center of Manila.—Tr.

[3] “The manager of this restaurant warns the public to leave absolutely nothing on any table or chair.”—Tr.

Pasquinades

Very early the next morning Basilio arose to go to the hospital. He had his plans made: to visit his patients, to go afterwards to the University to see about his licentiateship, and then have an interview with Makaraig about the expense this would entail, for he had used up the greater part of his savings in ransoming Juli and in securing a house where she and her grandfather might live, and he had not dared to apply to Capitan Tiago, fearing that such a move would be construed as an advance on the legacy so often promised him.

Preoccupied with these thoughts, he paid no attention to the groups of students who were at such an early hour returning from the Walled City, as though the classrooms had been closed, nor did he even note the abstracted air of some of them, their whispered conversations, or the mysterious signals exchanged among them. So it was that when he reached San Juan de Dios and his friends asked him about the conspiracy, he gave a start, remembering what Simoun had planned, but which had miscarried, owing to the unexplained accident to the jeweler. Terrified, he asked in a trembling voice, at the same

time endeavoring to feign ignorance, “Ah, yes, what conspiracy?”

“It’s been discovered,” replied one, “and it seems that many are implicated in it.”

With an effort Basilio controlled himself. “Many implicated?” he echoed, trying to learn something from the looks of the others. “Who?”

“Students, a lot of students.”

Basilio did not think it prudent to ask more, fearing [255]that he would give himself away, so on the pretext of visiting his patients he left the group. One of the clinical professors met him and placing his hand mysteriously on the youth’s shoulder—the professor was a friend of his—asked him in a low voice, “Were you at that supper last night?”

In his excited frame of mind Basilio thought the professor had said *night before last*, which was the time of his interview with Simoun. He tried to explain. “I assure you,” he stammered, “that as Capitan Tiago was worse—and besides I had to finish that book—”

“You did well not to attend it,” said the professor. “But you’re a member of the students’ association?”

“I pay my dues.”

“Well then, a piece of advice: go home at once and destroy any papers you have that may compromise you.”

Basilio shrugged his shoulders—he had no papers, nothing more than his clinical notes.

“Has Señor Simoun—”

“Simoun has nothing to do with the affair, thank God!” interrupted the physician. “He was opportunely wounded by some unknown hand and is now confined to his bed. No, other hands are concerned in this, but hands no less terrible.”

Basilio drew a breath of relief. Simoun was the only one who could compromise him, although he thought of Cabesang Tales.

“Are there tulisanes—”

“No, man, nothing more than students.”

Basilio recovered his serenity. “What has happened then?” he made bold to ask.

“Seditious pasquinades have been found; didn’t you know about them?”

“Where?”

“In the University.”

“Nothing more than that?”

“Whew! What more do you want?” asked the professor, [256]almost in a rage. “The pasquinades are attributed to the students of the association—but, keep quiet!”

The professor of pathology came along, a man who had more the look of a sacristan than of a physician. Appointed by the powerful mandate of the Vice-Rector, without other merit than unconditional servility to the corporation, he passed for a spy and an informer in the eyes of the rest of the faculty.

The first professor returned his greeting coldly, and winked to Basilio, as he said to him, “Now I know that Capitan Tiago smells like a corpse—the crows and vultures have been gathering around him.” So saying, he went inside.

Somewhat calmed, Basilio now ventured to inquire for more details, but all that he could learn was that pasquinades had been found on the doors of the University, and that the Vice-Rector had ordered them to be taken down and sent to the Civil Government. It was said that they were filled with

threats of assassination, invasion, and other braggadocio.

The students made their comments on the affair. Their information came from the janitor, who had it from a servant in Santo Tomas, who had it from an usher. They prognosticated future suspensions and imprisonments, even indicating who were to be the victims—naturally the members of the association.

Basilio then recalled Simoun's words: "The day in which they can get rid of you, you will not complete your course."

"Could he have known anything?" he asked himself. "We'll see who is the most powerful."

Recovering his serenity, he went on toward the University, to learn what attitude it behooved him to take and at the same time to see about his licentiateship. He passed along Calle Legazpi, then down through Beaterio, and upon arriving at the corner of this street and Calle Solana saw that something important must indeed have happened. Instead of the former lively, chattering groups on the sidewalks [257]were to be seen civil-guards making the students move on, and these latter issuing from the

University silent, some gloomy, some agitated, to stand off at a distance or make their way home.

The first acquaintance he met was Sandoval, but Basilio called to him in vain. He seemed to have been smitten deaf. “Effect of fear on the gastro-intestinal juices,” thought Basilio.

Later he met Tadeo, who wore a Christmas face—at last that eternal holiday seemed to be realized.

“What has happened, Tadeo?”

“We’ll have no school, at least for a week, old man! Sublime! Magnificent!” He rubbed his hands in glee.

“But what has happened?”

“They’re going to arrest all of us in the association.”

“And are you glad of that?”

“There’ll be no school, there’ll be no school!” He moved away almost bursting with joy.

Basilio saw Juanito Pelaez approaching, pale and suspicious. This time his hump had reached its maximum, so great was his haste to get away. He had been one of the most active promoters of the association while things were running smoothly.

“Eh, Pelaez, what’s happened?”

“Nothing, I know nothing. I didn’t have anything to do with it,” he responded nervously. “I was always telling you that these things were quixotisms. It’s the truth, you know I’ve said so to you?”

Basilio did not remember whether he had said so or not, but to humor him replied, “Yes, man, but what’s happened?”

“It’s the truth, isn’t it? Look, you’re a witness: I’ve always been opposed—you’re a witness, don’t forget it!”

“Yes, man, but what’s going on?”

“Listen, you’re a witness! I’ve never had anything to do with the members of the association, except to give them [258]advice. You’re not going to deny it now. Be careful, won’t you?”

“No, no, I won’t deny it, but for goodness’ sake, what has happened?”

But Juanito was already far away. He had caught a glimpse of a guard approaching and feared arrest.

Basilio then went on toward the University to see if perhaps the secretary’s office might be open and if he could glean any further news. The office was closed, but there was an extraordinary commotion in the

building. Hurrying up and down the stairways were friars, army officers, private persons, old lawyers and doctors, there doubtless to offer their services to the endangered cause.

At a distance he saw his friend Isagani, pale and agitated, but radiant with youthful ardor, haranguing some fellow students with his voice raised as though he cared little that he be heard by everybody.

“It seems preposterous, gentlemen, it seems unreal, that an incident so insignificant should scatter us and send us into flight like sparrows at whom a scarecrow has been shaken! But is this the first time that students have gone to prison for the sake of liberty? Where are those who have died, those who have been shot? Would you apostatize now?”

“But who can the fool be that wrote such pasquinades?” demanded an indignant listener.

“What does that matter to us?” rejoined Isagani. “We don’t have to find out, let them find out! Before we know how they are drawn up, we have no need to make any show of agreement at a time like this. There where the danger is, there must we hasten, because honor is there! If what the pasquinades say is compatible with our dignity and our feelings, be he

who he may that wrote them, he has done well, and we ought to be grateful to him and hasten to add our signatures to his! If they are unworthy of us, our conduct and our consciences will in themselves protest and defend us from every accusation!”[259]

Upon hearing such talk, Basilio, although he liked Isagani very much, turned and left. He had to go to Makaraig’s house to see about the loan.

Near the house of the wealthy student he observed whisperings and mysterious signals among the neighbors, but not comprehending what they meant, continued serenely on his way and entered the doorway. Two guards advanced and asked him what he wanted. Basilio realized that he had made a bad move, but he could not now retreat.

“I’ve come to see my friend Makaraig,” he replied calmly.

The guards looked at each other. “Wait here,” one of them said to him. “Wait till the corporal comes down.”

Basilio bit his lips and Simoun’s words again recurred to him. Had they come to arrest Makaraig? —was his thought, but he dared not give it utterance. He did not have to wait long, for in a few moments

Makaraig came down, talking pleasantly with the corporal. The two were preceded by a warrant officer.

“What, you too, Basilio?” he asked.

“I came to see you—”

“Noble conduct!” exclaimed Makaraig laughing. “In time of calm, you avoid us.”

The corporal asked Basilio his name, then scanned a list. “Medical student, Calle Anloague?” he asked.

Basilio bit his lip.

“You’ve saved us a trip,” added the corporal, placing his hand on the youth’s shoulder. “You’re under arrest!”

“What, I also?”

Makaraig burst out into laughter.

“Don’t worry, friend. Let’s get into the carriage, while I tell you about the supper last night.”

With a graceful gesture, as though he were in his own house, he invited the warrant officer and the corporal to enter the carriage that waited at the door.

“To the Civil Government!” he ordered the cochero.

Now that Basilio had again regained his composure, he [260]told Makaraig the object of his visit. The rich student did not wait for him to finish, but seized his hand. “Count on me, count on me, and to the festivities celebrating our graduation we’ll invite these gentlemen,” he said, indicating the corporal and the warrant officer.[261]

The Friar and the Filipino

Vox populi, vox Dei

We left Isagani haranguing his friends. In the midst of his enthusiasm an usher approached him to say that Padre Fernandez, one of the higher professors, wished to talk with him.

Isagani's face fell. Padre Fernandez was a person greatly respected by him, being the *one* always excepted by him whenever the friars were attacked.

"What does Padre Fernandez want?" he inquired.

The usher shrugged his shoulders and Isagani reluctantly followed him.

Padre Fernandez, the friar whom we met in Los Baños, was waiting in his cell, grave and sad, with his brows knitted as if he were in deep thought. He arose as Isagani entered, shook hands with him, and closed the door. Then he began to pace from one end of the room to the other. Isagani stood waiting for him to speak.

"Señor Isagani," he began at length with some emotion, "from the window I've heard you speaking, for though I am a consumptive I have good ears, and I want to talk with you. I have always liked the young

men who express themselves clearly and have their own way of thinking and acting, no matter that their ideas may differ from mine. You young men, from what I have heard, had a supper last night. Don't excuse yourself—"

"I don't intend to excuse myself!" interrupted Isagani.

"So much the better—it shows that you accept the consequences of your actions. Besides, you would do ill in [262]retracting, and I don't blame you, I take no notice of what may have been said there last night, I don't accuse you, because after all you're free to say of the Dominicans what seems best to you, you are not a pupil of ours—only this year have we had the pleasure of having you, and we shall probably not have you longer. Don't think that I'm going to invoke considerations of gratitude; no, I'm not going to waste my time in stupid vulgarisms. I've had you summoned here because I believe that you are one of the few students who act from conviction, and, as I like men of conviction, I'm going to explain myself to Señor Isagani."

Padre Fernandez paused, then continued his walk with bowed head, his gaze riveted on the floor.

“You may sit down, if you wish,” he remarked. “It’s a habit of mine to walk about while talking, because my ideas come better then.”

Isagani remained standing, with his head erect, waiting for the professor to get to the point of the matter.

“For more than eight years I have been a professor here,” resumed Padre Fernandez, still continuing to pace back and forth, “and in that time I’ve known and dealt with more than twenty-five hundred students. I’ve taught them, I’ve tried to educate them, I’ve tried to inculcate in them principles of justice and of dignity, and yet in these days when there is so much murmuring against us I’ve not seen one who has the temerity to maintain his accusations when he finds himself in the presence of a friar, not even aloud in the presence of any numbers. Young men there are who behind our backs calumniate us and before us kiss our hands, with a base smile begging kind looks from us! Bah! What do you wish that we should do with such creatures?”

“The fault is not all theirs, Padre,” replied Isagani. “The fault lies partly with those who have taught them to be hypocrites, with those who have

tyrannized over freedom of thought and freedom of speech. Here every independent [263]thought, every word that is not an echo of the will of those in power, is characterized as filibusterism, and you know well enough what that means. A fool would he be who to please himself would say aloud what he thinks, who would lay himself liable to suffer persecution!"

"What persecution have you had to suffer?" asked Padre Fernandez, raising his head. "Haven't I let you express yourself freely in my class? Nevertheless, you are an exception that, if what you say is true, I must correct, so as to make the rule as general as possible and thus avoid setting a bad example."

Isagani smiled. "I thank you, but I will not discuss with you whether I am an exception. I will accept your qualification so that you may accept mine: you also are an exception, and as here we are not going to talk about exceptions, nor plead for ourselves, at least, I mean, *I'm not*, I beg of my *professor* to change the course of the conversation."

In spite of his liberal principles, Padre Fernandez raised his head and stared in surprise at Isagani. That young man was more independent than he had thought—although he called him *professor*, in reality

he was dealing with him as an equal, since he allowed himself to offer suggestions. Like a wise diplomat, Padre Fernandez not only recognized the fact but even took his stand upon it.

“Good enough!” he said. “But don’t look upon me as your professor. I’m a friar and you are a Filipino student, nothing more nor less! Now I ask you—what do the Filipino students want of us?”

The question came as a surprise; Isagani was not prepared for it. It was a thrust made suddenly while they were preparing their defense, as they say in fencing. Thus startled, Isagani responded with a violent stand, like a beginner defending himself.

“That you do your duty!” he exclaimed.

Fray Fernandez straightened up—that reply sounded to him like a cannon-shot. “That we do our duty!” he [264]repeated, holding himself erect. “Don’t we, then, do our duty? What duties do you ascribe to us?”

“Those which you voluntarily placed upon yourselves on joining the order, and those which afterwards, once in it, you have been willing to assume. But, as a Filipino student, I don’t think myself called upon to examine your conduct with reference to your statutes, to Catholicism, to the

government, to the Filipino people, and to humanity in general—those are questions that you have to settle with your founders, with the Pope, with the government, with the whole people, and with God. As a Filipino student, I will confine myself to your duties toward us. The friars in general, being the local supervisors of education in the provinces, and the Dominicans in particular, by monopolizing in their hands all the studies of the Filipino youth, have assumed the obligation to its eight millions of inhabitants, to Spain, and to humanity, of which we form a part, of steadily bettering the young plant, morally and physically, of training it toward its happiness, of creating a people honest, prosperous, intelligent, virtuous, noble, and loyal. Now I ask you in my turn—have the friars fulfilled that obligation of theirs?"

"We're fulfilling—"

"Ah, Padre Fernandez," interrupted Isagani, "you with your hand on *your* heart can say that you are fulfilling it, but with your hand on the heart of your order, on the heart of all the orders, you cannot say that without deceiving yourself. Ah, Padre Fernandez, when I find myself in the presence of a person whom I esteem and respect, I prefer to be the

accused rather than the accuser, I prefer to defend myself rather than take the offensive. But now that we have entered upon the discussion, let us carry it to the end! How do they fulfill their obligation, those who look after education in the towns? By hindering it! And those who here monopolize education, those who try to mold the mind of youth, to the exclusion of all others whomsoever, how do they carry out their mission? By [265]curtailing knowledge as much as possible, by extinguishing all ardor and enthusiasm, by trampling on all dignity, the soul's only refuge, by inculcating in us worn-out ideas, rancid beliefs, false principles incompatible with a life of progress! Ah, yes, when it is a question of feeding convicts, of providing for the maintenance of criminals, the government calls for bids in order to find the purveyor who offers the best means of subsistence, he who at least will not let them perish from hunger, but when it is a question of morally feeding a whole people, of nourishing the intellect of youth, the healthiest part, that which is later to be the country and the all, the government not only does not ask for any bid, but restricts the power to that very body which makes a boast of not desiring education, of wishing no advancement. What should we say if the purveyor for the prisons, after securing the contract

by intrigue, should then leave the prisoners to languish in want, giving them only what is stale and rancid, excusing himself afterwards by saying that it is not convenient for the prisoners to enjoy good health, because good health brings merry thoughts, because merriment improves the man, and the man ought not to be improved, because it is to the purveyor's interest that there be many criminals? What should we say if afterwards the government and the purveyor should agree between themselves that of the ten or twelve cuartos which one received for each criminal, the other should receive five?"

Padre Fernandek bit his lip. "Those are grave charges," he said, "and you are overstepping the limits of our agreement."

"No, Padre, not if I continue to deal with the student question. The friars—and I do not say, you friars, since I do not confuse you with the common herd—the friars of all the orders have constituted themselves our mental purveyors, yet they say and shamelessly proclaim that it is not expedient for us to become enlightened, because some day we shall declare ourselves free! That is just the same[266]as not wishing the prisoner to be well-fed so that he may improve and get out of prison. Liberty is to man what

education is to the intelligence, and the friars' unwillingness that we have it is the origin of our discontent."

"Instruction is given only to those who deserve it," rejoined Padre Fernandez dryly. "To give it to men without character and without morality is to prostitute it."

"Why are there men without character and without morality?"

The Dominican shrugged his shoulders. "Defects that they imbibe with their mothers' milk, that they breathe in the bosom of the family—how do I know?"

"Ah, no, Padre Fernandez!" exclaimed the young man impetuously. "You have not dared to go into the subject deeply, you have not wished to gaze into the depths from fear of finding yourself there in the darkness of your brethren. What we are, you have made us. A people tyrannized over is forced to be hypocritical; a people denied the truth must resort to lies; and he who makes himself a tyrant breeds slaves. There is no morality, you say, so let it be—even though statistics can refute you in that here are not committed crimes like those among other

peoples, blinded by the fumes of their moralizers. But, without attempting now to analyze what it is that forms the character and how far the education received determines morality, I will agree with you that we are defective. Who is to blame for that? You who for three centuries and a half have had in your hands our education, or we who submit to everything? If after three centuries and a half the artist has been able to produce only a caricature, stupid indeed he must be!"

"Or bad enough the material he works upon."

"Stupider still then, when, knowing it to be bad, he does not give it up, but goes on wasting time. Not only is he stupid, but he is a cheat and a robber, because he knows that his work is useless, yet continues to draw his salary. Not only is he stupid and a thief, he is a villain in that [267]he prevents any other workman from trying his skill to see if he might not produce something worth while! The deadly jealousy of the incompetent!"

The reply was sharp and Padre Fernandez felt himself caught. To his gaze Isagani appeared gigantic, invincible, convincing, and for the first time in his life he felt beaten by a Filipino student. He repented

of having provoked the argument, but it was too late to turn back. In this quandary, finding himself confronted with such a formidable adversary, he sought a strong shield and laid hold of the government.

“You impute all the faults to us, because you see only us, who are near,” he said in a less haughty tone. “It’s natural and doesn’t surprise me. A person hates the soldier or policeman who arrests him and not the judge who sends him to prison. You and we are both dancing to the same measure of music—if at the same note you lift your foot in unison with us, don’t blame us for it, it’s the music that is directing our movements. Do you think that we friars have no consciences and that we do not desire what is right? Do you believe that we do not think about you, that we do not heed our duty, that we only eat to live, and live to rule? Would that it were so! But we, like you, follow the cadence, finding ourselves between Scylla and Charybdis: either you reject us or the government rejects us. The government commands, and he who commands, commands,—and must be obeyed!”

“From which it may be inferred,” remarked Isagani with a bitter smile, “that the government wishes our demoralization.”

“Oh, no, I didn’t mean that! What I meant to say is that there are beliefs, there are theories, there are laws, which, dictated with the best intention, produce the most deplorable consequences. I’ll explain myself better by citing an example. To stamp out a small evil, there are dictated many laws that cause greater evils still: ‘*corruptissima in republica plurimae leges,*’ said Tacitus. To prevent [268]one case of fraud, there are provided a million and a half preventive or humiliating regulations, which produce the immediate effect of awakening in the public the desire to elude and mock such regulations. To make a people criminal, there’s nothing more needed than to doubt its virtue. Enact a law, not only here, but even in Spain, and you will see how the means of evading it will be sought, and this is for the very reason that the legislators have overlooked the fact that the more an object is hidden, the more a sight of it is desired. Why are rascality and astuteness regarded as great qualities in the Spanish people, when there is no other so noble, so proud, so chivalrous as it? Because our legislators, with the best intentions, have doubted its nobility, wounded its pride, challenged its chivalry! Do you wish to open in Spain a road among the rocks? Then place there an imperative notice forbidding the passage, and the people, in order to

protest against the order, will leave the highway to clamber over the rocks. The day on which some legislator in Spain forbids virtue and commands vice, then all will become virtuous!”

The Dominican paused for a brief space, then resumed: “But you may say that we are getting away from the subject, so I’ll return to it. What I can say to you, to convince you, is that the vices from which you suffer ought to be ascribed by you neither to us nor to the government. They are due to the imperfect organization of our social system: *qui multum probat, nihil probat*, one loses himself through excessive caution, lacking what is necessary and having too much of what is superfluous.”

“If you admit those defects in your social system,” replied Isagani, “why then do you undertake to regulate alien societies, instead of first devoting your attention to yourselves?”

“We’re getting away from the subject, young man. The theory in accomplished facts must be accepted.”

“So let it be! I accept it because it is an accomplished [269]fact, but I will further ask: why, if your social organization is defective, do you not

change it or at least give heed to the cry of those who are injured by it?”

“We’re still far away. Let’s talk about what the students want from the friars.”

“From the moment when the friars hide themselves behind the government, the students have to turn to it.”

This statement was true and there appeared no means of ignoring it.

“I’m not the government and I can’t answer for its acts. What do the students wish us to do for them within the limits by which we are confined?”

“Not to oppose the emancipation of education but to favor it.”

The Dominican shook his head. “Without stating my own opinion, that is asking us to commit suicide,” he said.

“On the contrary, it is asking you for room to pass in order not to trample upon and crush you.”

“Ahem!” coughed Padre Fernandez, stopping and remaining thoughtful. “Begin by asking something that does not cost so much, something that any one of

us can grant without abatement of dignity or privilege, for if we can reach an understanding and dwell in peace, why this hatred, why this distrust?"

"Then let's get down to details."

"Yes, because if we disturb the foundation, we'll bring down the whole edifice."

"Then let's get down to details, let's leave the region of abstract principles," rejoined Isagani with a smile, "and *also without stating my own opinion,*"—the youth accented these words—"the students would desist from their attitude and soften certain asperities if the professors would try to treat them better than they have up to the present. That is in their hands."

"What?" demanded the Dominican. "Have the students any complaint to make about my conduct?"

"Padre, we agreed from the start not to talk of yourself [270]or of myself, we're speaking generally. The students, besides getting no great benefit out of the years spent in the classes, often leave there remnants of their dignity, if not the whole of it."

Padre Fernandez again bit his lip. "No one forces them to study—the fields are uncultivated," he observed dryly.

“Yes, there is something that impels them to study,” replied Isagani in the same tone, looking the Dominican full in the face. “Besides the duty of every one to seek his own perfection, there is the desire innate in man to cultivate his intellect, a desire the more powerful here in that it is repressed. He who gives his gold and his life to the State has the right to require of it opporttmity better to get that gold and better to care for his life. Yes, Padre, there is something that impels them, and that something is the government itself. It is you yourselves who pitilessly ridicule the uncultured Indian and deny him his rights, on the ground that he is ignorant. You strip him and then scoff at his nakedness.”

Padre Fernandez did not reply, but continued to pace about feverishly, as though very much agitated.

“You say that the fields are not cultivated,” resumed Isagani in a changed tone, after a brief pause. “Let’s not enter upon an analysis of the reason for this, because we should get far away. But you, Padre Fernandez, you, a teacher, you, a learned man, do you wish a people of peons and laborers? In your opinion, is the laborer the perfect state at which man may arrive in his development? Or is it that you wish knowledge for yourself and labor for the rest?”

“No, I want knowledge for him who deserves it, for him who knows how to use it,” was the reply. “When the students demonstrate that they love it, when young men of conviction appear, young men who know how to maintain their dignity and make it respected, then there will be knowledge, then there will be considerate professors! If [271]there are now professors who resort to abuse, it is because there are pupils who submit to it.”

“When there are professors, there will be students!”

“Begin by reforming yourselves, you who have need of change, and we will follow.”

“Yes,” said Isagani with a bitter laugh, “let us begin it, because the difficulty is on our side. Well you know what is expected of a pupil who stands before a professor—you yourself, with all your love of justice, with all your kind sentiments, have been restraining yourself by a great effort while I have been telling you bitter truths, you yourself, Padre Fernandez! What good has been secured by him among us who has tried to inculcate other ideas? What evils have not fallen upon you because you have tried to be just and perform your duty?”

“Señor Isagani,” said the Dominican, extending his hand, “although it may seem that nothing practical has resulted from this conversation, yet something has been gained. I’ll talk to my brethren about what you have told me and I hope that something can be done. Only I fear that they won’t believe in your existence.”

“I fear the same,” returned Isagani, shaking the Dominican’s hand. “I fear that my friends will not believe in your existence, as you have revealed yourself to me today.”[1][272]

Considering the interview at an end, the young man took his leave.

Padre Fernandez opened the door and followed him with his gaze until he disappeared around a corner in the corridor. For some time he listened to the retreating footsteps, then went back into his cell and waited for the youth to appear in the street.

He saw him and actually heard him say to a friend who asked where he was going: “To the Civil Government! I’m going to see the pasquinades and join the others!”

His startled friend stared at him as one would look at a person who is about to commit suicide, then moved

away from him hurriedly.

“Poor boy!” murmured Padre Fernandez, feeling his eyes moisten. “I grudge you to the Jesuits who educated you.”

But Padre Fernandez was completely mistaken; the Jesuits repudiated Isagani[2] when that afternoon they learned that he had been arrested, saying that he would compromise them. “That young man has thrown himself away, he’s going to do us harm! Let it be understood that he didn’t get those ideas here.”

Nor were the Jesuits wrong. No! Those ideas come only from God through the medium of Nature.[273]

[1] “We do not believe in the verisimilitude of this dialogue, fabricated by the author in order to refute the arguments of the friars, whose pride was so great that it would not permit any Isagani to tell them these truths face to face. The *invention* of Padre Fernandez as a Dominican professor is a stroke of generosity on Rizal’s part, in conceding that there could have existed *any* friar capable of talking frankly with an *Indian*.”—*W. E. Retana, in note to this chapter in the edition published by him at Barcelona in 1908*. Retana ought to know of what he is writing, for he was in the employ of the friars for several years and later in Spain wrote extensively for the journal supported by them to defend their position in the Philippines. He has also been charged with having strongly urged Rizal’s execution in 1896. Since 1898, however, he has doubled about, or, perhaps more aptly, performed a journalistic somersault—having written a diffuse biography and other works dealing with Rizal. He is strong in unassorted [272n]facts, but his comments, when not inane and wearisome, approach a maudlin wail over “spilt milk,” so the above is given at its face value only.—Tr.

[2] Quite suggestive of, and perhaps inspired by, the author’s own experience.—Tr.

Tatakut

With prophetic inspiration Ben-Zayb had been for some days past maintaining in his newspaper that education was disastrous, very disastrous for the Philippine Islands, and now in view of the events of that Friday of pasquinades, the writer crowed and chanted his triumph, leaving belittled and overwhelmed his adversary *Horatius*, who in the *Pirotecnia* had dared to ridicule him in the following manner:

From our contemporary, *El Grito*:

"Education is disastrous, very disastrous, for the Philippine Islands."

Admitted.

For some time *El Grito* has pretended to represent the Filipino people—*ergo*, as Fray Ibañez would say, if he knew Latin.

But Fray Ibañez turns Mussulman when he writes, and we know how the Mussulmans dealt with education. *In witness whereof*, as a royal preacher said, the Alexandrian library!

Now he was right, he, Ben-Zayb! He was the only one in the islands who thought, the only one who foresaw events!

Truly, the news that seditious pasquinades had been found on the doors of the University not only took away the appetite from many and disturbed the digestion of others, but it even rendered the phlegmatic Chinese uneasy, so that they no longer dared to sit in their shops with one leg drawn up as

usual, from fear of losing time in extending it in order to put themselves into flight. At eight o'clock in the morning, although the sun continued on its course and his Excellency, the Captain-General, did not appear at the head of his victorious cohorts, still the [274]excitement had increased. The friars who were accustomed to frequent Quiroga's bazaar did not put in their appearance, and this symptom presaged terrific cataclysms. If the sun had risen a square and the saints appeared only in pantaloons, Quiroga would not have been so greatly alarmed, for he would have taken the sun for a gaming-table and the sacred images for gamblers who had lost their camisas, but for the friars not to come, precisely when some novelties had just arrived for them!

By means of a provincial friend of his, Quiroga forbade entrance into his gaming-houses to every Indian who was not an old acquaintance, as the future Chinese consul feared that they might get possession of the sums that the wretches lost there. After arranging his bazaar in such a way that he could close it quickly in case of need, he had a policeman accompany him for the short distance that separated his house from Simoun's. Quiroga thought this occasion the most propitious for making use of the

rifles and cartridges that he had in his warehouse, in the way the jeweler had pointed out; so that on the following days there would be searches made, and then—how many prisoners, how many terrified people would give up their savings! It was the game of the old carbineers, in slipping contraband cigars and tobacco-leaves under a house, in order to pretend a search and force the unfortunate owner to bribery or fines, only now the art had been perfected and, the tobacco monopoly abolished, resort was had to the prohibited arms.

But Simoun refused to see any one and sent word to the Chinese that he should leave things as they were, whereupon he went to see Don Custodio to inquire whether he should fortify his bazaar, but neither would Don Custodio receive him, being at the time engaged in the study of a project for defense in case of a siege. He thought of Ben-Zayb as a source of information, but finding the writer armed to the teeth and using two loaded revolvers for paper-weights, took his leave in the shortest possible [275]time, to shut himself up in his house and take to his bed under pretense of illness.

At four in the afternoon the talk was no longer of simple pasquinades. There were whispered rumors of

an understanding between the students and the outlaws of San Mateo, it was certain that in the *pansitería* they had conspired to surprise the city, there was talk of German ships outside the bay to support the movement, of a band of young men who under the pretext of protesting and demonstrating their Hispanism had gone to the Palace to place themselves at the General's orders but had been arrested because it was discovered that they were armed. Providence had saved his Excellency, preventing him from receiving those precocious criminals, as he was at the time in conference with the Provincials, the Vice-Rector, and with Padre Irene, Padre Salvi's representative. There was considerable truth in these rumors, if we have to believe Padre Irene, who in the afternoon went to visit Capitan Tiago. According to him, certain persons had advised his Excellency to improve the opportunity in order to inspire terror and administer a lasting lesson to the filibusters.

"A number shot," one had advised, "some two dozen reformers deported at once, in the silence of the night, would extinguish forever the flames of discontent."

“No,” rejoined another, who had a kind heart, “sufficient that the soldiers parade through the streets, a troop of cavalry, for example, with drawn sabers—sufficient to drag along some cannon, that’s enough! The people are timid and will all retire into their houses.”

“No, no,” insinuated another. “This is the opportunity to get rid of the enemy. It’s not sufficient that they retire into their houses, they should be made to come out, like evil humors by means of plasters. If they are inclined to start riots, they should be stirred up by secret agitators. I am of the opinion that the troops should be resting on their arms and appearing careless and indifferent, so the people may be emboldened, and then in case of any disturbance—out on them, action!”[276]

“The end justifies the means,” remarked another. “Our end is our holy religion and the integrity of the fatherland. Proclaim a state of siege, and in case of the least disturbance, arrest all the rich and educated, and—clean up the country!”

“If I hadn’t got there in time to counsel moderation,” added Padre Irene, speaking to Capitan Tiago, “it’s certain that blood would now be flowing through the

streets. I thought of you, Capitan—The partizans of force couldn't do much with the General, and they missed Simoun. Ah, if Simoun had not been taken ill —"

With the arrest of Basilio and the search made later among his books and papers, Capitan Tiago had become much worse. Now Padre Irene had come to augment his terror with hair-raising tales. Ineffable fear seized upon the wretch, manifesting itself first by a light shiver, which was rapidly accentuated, until he was unable to speak. With his eyes bulging and his brow covered with sweat, he caught Padre Irene's arm and tried to rise, but could not, and then, uttering two groans, fell heavily back upon the pillow. His eyes were wide open and he was slavering—but he was dead. The terrified Padre Irene fled, and, as the dying man had caught hold of him, in his flight he dragged the corpse from the bed, leaving it sprawling in the middle of the room.

By night the terror had reached a climax. Several incidents had occurred to make the timorous believe in the presence of secret agitators.

During a baptism some cuartos were thrown to the boys and naturally there was a scramble at the door

of the church. It happened that at the time there was passing a bold soldier, who, somewhat preoccupied, mistook the uproar for a gathering of filibusters and hurled himself, sword in hand, upon the boys. He went into the church, and had he not become entangled in the curtains suspended from the choir he would not have left a single head on shoulders. It was but the matter of a moment for the [277]timorous to witness this and take to flight, spreading the news that the revolution had begun. The few shops that had been kept open were now hastily closed, there being Chinese who even left bolts of cloth outside, and not a few women lost their slippers in their flight through the streets. Fortunately, there was only one person wounded and a few bruised, among them the soldier himself, who suffered a fall fighting with the curtain, which smelt to him of filibusterism. Such prowess gained him great renown, and a renown so pure that it is to be wished all fame could be acquired in like manner—mothers would then weep less and earth would be more populous!

In a suburb the inhabitants caught two unknown individuals burying arms under a house, whereupon a tumult arose and the people pursued the strangers in order to kill them and turn their bodies over to the

authorities, but some one pacified the excited crowd by telling them that it would be sufficient to hand over the *corpora delictorum*, which proved to be some old shotguns that would surely have killed the first person who tried to fire them.

"All right," exclaimed one braggart, "if they want us to rebel, let's go ahead!" But he was cuffed and kicked into silence, the women pinching him as though he had been the owner of the shotguns.

In Ermita the affair was more serious, even though there was less excitement, and that when there were shots fired. A certain cautious government employee, armed to the teeth, saw at nightfall an object near his house, and taking it for nothing less than a student, fired at it twice with a revolver. The object proved to be a policeman, and they buried him—*pax Christi! Mutis!*

In Dulumbayan various shots also resounded, from which there resulted the death of a poor old deaf man, who had not heard the sentinel's *quién vive*, and of a hog that had heard it and had not answered *España*! The old man was buried with difficulty, since there was no money to pay for the obsequies, but the hog was eaten.[278]

In Manila,[1] in a confectionery near the University much frequented by the students, the arrests were thus commented upon.

“And have they arrested Tadeo?”[2] asked the proprietess.

“*Abá*!” answered a student who lived in Parian, “he’s already shot!”

“Shot! *Nakú*! He hasn’t paid what he owes me.”

“Ay, don’t mention that or you’ll be taken for an accomplice. I’ve already burnt the book[3] you lent me. There might be a search and it would be found. Be careful!”

“Did you say that Isagani is a prisoner?”

“Crazy fool, too, that Isagani,” replied the indignant student. “They didn’t try to catch him, but he went and surrendered. Let him bust himself—he’ll surely be shot.”

The señora shrugged her shoulders. “He doesn’t owe me anything. And what about Paulita?”

“She won’t lack a husband. Sure, she’ll cry a little, and then marry a Spaniard.”

The night was one of the gloomiest. In the houses the rosary was recited and pious women dedicated paternosters and requiems to each of the souls of their relatives and friends. By eight o'clock hardly a pedestrian could be seen—only from time to time was heard the galloping of a horse against whose sides a saber clanked noisily, then the whistles of the watchmen, and carriages that whirled along at full speed, as though pursued by mobs of filibusters.

Yet terror did not reign everywhere. In the house of the silversmith, where Placido Penitente boarded, the events were commented upon and discussed with some freedom.[279]

"I don't believe in the pasquinades," declared a workman, lank and withered from operating the blowpipe. "To me it looks like Padre Salvi's doings."

"Ahem, ahem!" coughed the silversmith, a very prudent man, who did not dare to stop the conversation from fear that he would be considered a coward. The good man had to content himself with coughing, winking to his helper, and gazing toward the street, as if to say, "They may be watching us!"

"On account of the operetta," added another workman.

“Aha!” exclaimed one who had a foolish face, “I told you so!”

“Ahem!” rejoined a clerk, in a tone of compassion, “the affair of the pasquinades is true, Chichoy, and I can give you the explanation.”

Then he added mysteriously, “It’s a trick of the Chinaman Quiroga’s!”

“Ahem, ahem!” again coughed the silversmith, shifting his quid of buyo from one cheek to the other.

“Believe me, Chichoy, of Quiroga the Chinaman! I heard it in the office.”

“*Nakú*, it’s certain then,” exclaimed the simpleton, believing it at once.

“Quiroga,” explained the clerk, “has a hundred thousand pesos in Mexican silver out in the bay. How is he to get it in? Very easily. Fix up the pasquinades, availing himself of the question of the students, and, while every-body is excited, grease the officials’ palms, and in the cases come!”

“Just it! Just it!” cried the credulous fool, striking the table with his fist. “Just it! That’s why Quiroga did it! That’s why—” But he had to relapse into silence as he really did not know what to say about Quiroga.

“And we must pay the damages?” asked the indignant Chichoy.

“Ahem, ahem, a-h-hem!” coughed the silversmith, hearing steps in the street.[280]

The footsteps approached and all in the shop fell silent.

“St. Pascual Bailon is a great saint,” declared the silversmith hypocritically, in a loud voice, at the same time winking to the others. “St. Pascual Bailon __”

At that moment there appeared the face of Placido Penitente, who was accompanied by the pyrotechnician that we saw receiving orders from Simoun. The newcomers were surrounded and importuned for news.

“I haven’t been able to talk with the prisoners,” explained Placido. “There are some thirty of them.”

“Be on your guard,” cautioned the pyrotechnician, exchanging a knowing look with Placido. “They say that to-night there’s going to be a massacre.”

“Aha! Thunder!” exclaimed Chichoy, looking about for a weapon. Seeing none, he caught up his blowpipe.

The silversmith sat down, trembling in every limb. The credulous simpleton already saw himself beheaded and wept in anticipation over the fate of his family.

“No,” contradicted the clerk, “there’s not going to be any massacre. The adviser of’—he made a mysterious gesture—“is fortunately sick.”

“Simoun!”

“Ahem, ahem, a-h-hem!”

Placido and the pyrotechnician exchanged another look.

“If he hadn’t got sick—”

“It would look like a revolution,” added the pyrotechnician negligently, as he lighted a cigarette in the lamp chimney. “And what should we do then?”

“Then we’d start a real one, now that they’re going to massacre us anyhow—”

The violent fit of coughing that seized the silversmith prevented the rest of this speech from being heard, but Chichoy must have been saying terrible things, to judge from his murderous gestures with the blowpipe and the face of a Japanese tragedian that he put on.

“Rather say that he’s playing off sick because he’s afraid to go out. As may be seen—”[281]

The silversmith was attacked by another fit of coughing so severe that he finally asked all to retire.

“Nevertheless, get ready,” warned the pyrotechnician. “If they want to force us to kill or be killed—”

Another fit of coughing on the part of the poor silversmith prevented further conversation, so the workmen and apprentices retired to their homes, carrying with them hammers and saws, and other implements, more or less cutting, more or less bruising, disposed to sell their lives dearly. Placido and the pyrotechnician went out again.

“Prudence, prudence!” cautioned the silversmith in a tearful voice.

“You’ll take care of my widow and orphans!” begged the credulous simpleton in a still more tearful voice, for he already saw himself riddled with bullets and buried.

That night the guards at the city gates were replaced with Peninsular artillerymen, and on the following morning as the sun rose, Ben-Zayb, who had ventured to take a morning stroll to examine the

condition of the fortifications, found on the glacis near the Luneta the corpse of a native girl, half-naked and abandoned. Ben-Zayb was horrified, but after touching it with his cane and gazing toward the gates proceeded on his way, musing over a sentimental tale he might base upon the incident.

However, no allusion to it appeared in the newspapers on the following days, engrossed as they were with the falls and slippings caused by banana-peels. In the dearth of news Ben-Zayb had to comment at length on a cyclone that had destroyed in America whole towns, causing the death of more than two thousand persons. Among other beautiful things he said:

"*The sentiment of charity*, MORE PREVALENT IN CATHOLIC COUNTRIES THAN IN OTHERS, and the thought of Him who, influenced by that same feeling, sacrificed himself for *humanity, moves (sic)* us to compassion over the misfortunes of our kind and to render thanks that *in this country*, so scourged by cyclones, there are not enacted scenes so desolating as that which the inhabitants of the United States mus have witnessed!"

[282]

Horatius did not miss the opportunity, and, also without mentioning the dead, or the murdered native girl, or the assaults, answered him in his *Pirotecnia*:

"After such great charity and such great humanity, Fray Ibañez—I mean, Ben-Zayb—brings himself to pray for the Philippines.

But he is understood.

Because he is not Catholic, and the sentiment of charity is most prevalent," etc.[4]

[283]

[1] The Walled City, the original Manila, is still known to the Spaniards and older natives exclusively as such, the other districts being referred to by their distinctive names.—Tr.

[2] Nearly all the dialogue in this chapter is in the mongrel Spanish-Tagalog "market language," which cannot be reproduced in English.—Tr.

[3] Doubtless a reference to the author's first work, *Noli Me Tangere*, which was tabooed by the authorities.—Tr.

[4] Such inanities as these are still a feature of Manila journalism.—Tr.

Exit Capitan Tiago

Talis vita, finis ita

Capitan Tiago had a good end—that is, a quite exceptional funeral. True it is that the curate of the parish had ventured the observation to Padre Irene that Capitan Tiago had died without confession, but the good priest, smiling sardonically, had rubbed the tip of his nose and answered:

“Why say that to me? If we had to deny the obsequies to all who die without confession, we should forget the *De profundis*! These restrictions, as you well know, are enforced when the impenitent is also insolvent. But Capitan Tiago—out on you! You’ve buried infidel Chinamen, and with a requiem mass!”

Capitan Tiago had named Padre Irene as his executor and willed his property in part to St. Clara, part to the Pope, to the Archbishop, the religious corporations, leaving twenty pesos for the matriculation of poor students. This last clause had been dictated at the suggestion of Padre Irene, in his capacity as protector of studious youths. Capitan Tiago had annulled a legacy of twenty-five pesos that he had left to Basilio, in view of the ungrateful conduct of the boy

during the last few days, but Padre Irene had restored it and announced that he would take it upon his own purse and conscience.

In the dead man's house, where were assembled on the following day many old friends and acquaintances, considerable comment was indulged in over a miracle. It was reported that, at the very moment when he was dying, the [284]soul of Capitan Tiago had appeared to the nuns surrounded by a brilliant light. God had saved him, thanks to the pious legacies, and to the numerous masses he had paid for. The story was commented upon, it was recounted vividly, it took on particulars, and was doubted by no one. The appearance of Capitan Tiago was minutely described—of course the frock coat, the cheek bulged out by the quid of buyo, without omitting the game-cock and the opium-pipe. The senior sacristan, who was present, gravely affirmed these facts with his head and reflected that, after death, he would appear with his cup of white *tajú*, for without that refreshing breakfast he could not comprehend happiness either on earth or in heaven.

On this subject, because of their inability to discuss the events of the preceding day and because there were gamblers present, many strange speculations

were developed. They made conjectures as to whether Capitan Tiago would invite St. Peter to a *soltada*, whether they would place bets, whether the game-cocks were immortal, whether invulnerable, and in this case who would be the referee, who would win, and so on: discussions quite to the taste of those who found sciences, theories, and systems, based on a text which they esteem infallible, revealed or dogmatic. Moreover, there were cited passages from novenas, books of miracles, sayings of the curates, descriptions of heaven, and other embroidery. Don Primitivo, the philosopher, was in his glory quoting opinions of the theologians.

"Because no one can lose," he stated with great authority. "To lose would cause hard feelings and in heaven there can't be any hard feelings."

"But some one has to win," rejoined the gambler Aristorenas. "The fun lies in winning!"

"Well, both win, that's easy!"

This idea of both winning could not be admitted by Aristorenas, for he had passed his life in the cockpit and had always seen one cock lose and the other win —at best, there was a tie. Vainly Don Primitivo argued in Latin. [285]Aristorenas shook his head, and

that too when Don Primitivo's Latin was easy to understand, for he talked of *an gallus talisainus, acuto tari armatus, an gallus beati Petri bulikus sasabunğus sit*,[1] and so on, until at length he decided to resort to the argument which many use to convince and silence their opponents.

"You're going to be damned, friend Martin, you're falling into heresy! *Cave ne cadas!* I'm not going to play monte with you any more, and we'll not set up a bank together. You deny the omnipotence of God, *peccatum mortale!* You deny the existence of the Holy Trinity— three are one and one is three! Take care! You indirectly deny that two natures, two understandings, and two wills can have only one memory! Be careful! *Quicumque non crederit anathema sit!*"

Martin Aristorenas shrank away pale and trembling, while Quiroga, who had listened with great attention to the argument, with marked deference offered the philosopher a magnificent cigar, at the same time asking in his caressing voice: "Surely, one can make a contract for a cockpit with Kilisto,[2] ha? When I die, I'll be the contractor, ha?"

Among the others, they talked more of the deceased; at least they discussed what kind of clothing to put on him. Capitan Tinong proposed a Franciscan habit—and fortunately, he had one, old, threadbare, and patched, a precious object which, according to the friar who gave it to him as alms in exchange for thirty-six pesos, would preserve the corpse from the flames of hell and which reckoned in its [286]support various pious anecdotes taken from the books distributed by the curates. Although he held this relic in great esteem, Capitan Tinong was disposed to part with it for the sake of his intimate friend, whom he had not been able to visit during his illness. But a tailor objected, with good reason, that since the nuns had seen Capitan Tiago ascending to heaven in a frock coat, in a frock coat he should be dressed here on earth, nor was there any necessity for preservatives and fire-proof garments. The deceased had attended balls and fiestas in a frock coat, and nothing else would be expected of him in the skies—and, wonderful to relate, the tailor accidentally happened to have one ready, which he would part with for thirty-two pesos, four cheaper than the Franciscan habit, because he didn't want to make any profit on Capitan Tiago, who had been his customer in life and would now be his patron in heaven. But

Padre Irene, trustee and executor, rejected both proposals and ordered that the Capitan be dressed in one of his old suits of clothes, remarking with holy unction that God paid no attention to clothing.

The obsequies were, therefore, of the very first class. There were responsories in the house, and in the street three friars officiated, as though one were not sufficient for such a great soul. All the rites and ceremonies possible were performed, and it is reported that there were even *extras*, as in the benefits for actors. It was indeed a delight: loads of incense were burned, there were plenty of Latin chants, large quantities of holy water were expended, and Padre Irene, out of regard for his old friend, sang the *Dies Irae* in a falsetto voice from the choir, while the neighbors suffered real headaches from so much knell-ringing.

Doña Patrocinio, the ancient rival of Capitan Tiago in religiosity, actually wanted to die on the next day, so that she might order even more sumptuous obsequies. The pious old lady could not bear the thought that he, whom she had long considered vanquished forever, should in dying come [287]forward again with so much pomp. Yes, she desired to die, and it seemed that she could hear the exclamations of the people at the

funeral: “This indeed is what you call a funeral! This indeed is to know how to die, Doña Patrocinio!”[288]

[1] “Whether there would be a *talisain* cock, armed with a sharp gaff, whether the blessed Peter’s fighting-cock would be a *bulik*—”

Talisain and *bulik* are distinguishing terms in the vernacular for fighting-cocks, *tari* and *sasabunḡin* the Tagalog terms for “gaff” and “game-cock,” respectively.

The Tagalog terminology of the cockpit and monkish Latin certainly make a fearful and wonderful mixture—nor did the author have to resort to his imagination to get samples of it.—Tr.

[2] This is Quiroga’s pronunciation of *Christo*.—Tr.

Juli

The death of Capitan Tiago and Basilio's imprisonment were soon reported in the province, and to the honor of the simple inhabitants of San Diego, let it be recorded that the latter was the incident more regretted and almost the only one discussed. As was to be expected, the report took on different forms, sad and startling details were given, what could not be understood was explained, the gaps being filled by conjectures, which soon passed for accomplished facts, and the phantoms thus created terrified their own creators.

In the town of Tiani it was reported that at least, at the very least, the young man was going to be deported and would very probably be murdered on the journey. The timorous and pessimistic were not satisfied with this but even talked about executions and courts-martial—January was a fatal month; in January the Cavite affair had occurred, and *they*[1] even though curates, had been garroted, so a poor Basilio without protectors or friends—

"I told him so!" sighed the Justice of the Peace, as if he had at some time given advice to Basilio. "I told him so."

“It was to be expected,” commented Sister Penchang. “He would go into the church and when he saw that the holy water was somewhat dirty he wouldn’t cross himself with it. He talked about germs and disease, *abá*, it’s the chastisement of God! He deserved it, and he got it! As [289]though the holy water could transmit diseases! Quite the contrary, *abá!*”

She then related how she had cured herself of indigestion by moistening her stomach with holy water, at the same time reciting the*Sanctus Deus*, and she recommended the remedy to those present when they should suffer from dysentery, or an epidemic occurred, only that then they must pray in Spanish:

> Santo Diós,
> Santo fuerte,
> Santo inmortal,
> ¡Libranos, Señor, de la peste
> Y de todo mal![2]

“It’s an infallible remedy, but you must apply the holy water to the part affected,” she concluded.

But there were many persons who did not believe in these things, nor did they attribute Basilio’s imprisonment to the chastisement of God. Nor did

they take any stock in insurrections and pasquinades, knowing the prudent and ultra-pacific character of the boy, but preferred to ascribe it to revenge on the part of the friars, because of his having rescued from servitude Juli, the daughter of a tulisan who was the mortal enemy of a certain powerful corporation. As they had quite a poor idea of the morality of that same corporation and could recall cases of petty revenge, their conjecture was believed to have more probability and justification.

“What a good thing I did when I drove her from my house!” said Sister Penchang. “I don’t want to have any trouble with the friars, so I urged her to find the money.”

The truth was, however, that she regretted Juli’s liberty, for Juli prayed and fasted for her, and if she had stayed a longer time, would also have done penance. Why, if the curates pray for us and Christ died for our sins, couldn’t Juli do the same for Sister Penchang?[290]

When the news reached the hut where the poor Juli and her grandfather lived, the girl had to have it repeated to her. She stared at Sister Bali, who was telling it, as though without comprehension, without

ability to collect her thoughts. Her ears buzzed, she felt a sinking at the heart and had a vague presentiment that this event would have a disastrous influence on her own future. Yet she tried to seize upon a ray of hope, she smiled, thinking that Sister Bali was joking with her, a rather strong joke, to be sure, but she forgave her beforehand if she would acknowledge that it was such. But Sister Bali made a cross with one of her thumbs and a forefinger, and kissed it, to prove that she was telling the truth. Then the smile faded forever from the girl's lips, she turned pale, frightfully pale, she felt her strength leave her and for the first time in her life she lost consciousness, falling into a swoon.

When by dint of blows, pinches, dashes of water, crosses, and the application of sacred palms, the girl recovered and remembered the situation, silent tears sprang from her eyes, drop by drop, without sobs, without laments, without complaints! She thought about Basilio, who had had no other protector than Capitan Tiago, and who now, with the Capitan dead, was left completely unprotected and in prison. In the Philippines it is a well-known fact that patrons are needed for everything, from the time one is christened until one dies, in order to get justice, to

secure a passport, or to develop an industry. As it was said that his imprisonment was due to revenge on account of herself and her father, the girl's sorrow turned to desperation. Now it was her duty to liberate him, as he had done in rescuing her from servitude, and the inner voice which suggested the idea offered to her imagination a horrible means.

"Padre Camorra, the curate," whispered the voice. Juli gnawed at her lips and became lost in gloomy meditation.

As a result of her father's crime, her grandfather had been arrested in the hope that by such means the son could be made to appear. The only one who could get him [291]his liberty was Padre Camorra, and Padre Camorra had shown himself to be poorly satisfied with her words of gratitude, having with his usual frankness asked for some sacrifices—since which time Juli had tried to avoid meeting him. But the curate made her kiss his hand, he twitched her nose and patted her cheeks, he joked with her, winking and laughing, and laughing he pinched her. Juli was also the cause of the beating the good curate had administered to some young men who were going about the village serenading the girls. Malicious ones, seeing her pass sad and dejected, would remark

so that she might hear: “If she only wished it, Cabesang Tales would be pardoned.”

Juli reached her home, gloomy and with wandering looks. She had changed greatly, having lost her merriment, and no one ever saw her smile again. She scarcely spoke and seemed to be afraid to look at her own face. One day she was seen in the town with a big spot of soot on her forehead, she who used to go so trim and neat. Once she asked Sister Bali if the people who committed suicide went to hell.

“Surely!” replied that woman, and proceeded to describe the place as though she had been there.

Upon Basilio’s imprisonment, the simple and grateful relatives had planned to make all kinds of sacrifices to save the young man, but as they could collect among themselves no more than thirty pesos, Sister Bali, as usual, thought of a better plan.

“What we must do is to get some advice from the town clerk,” she said. To these poor people, the town clerk was what the Delphic oracle was to the ancient Greeks.

“By giving him a real and a cigar,” she continued, “he’ll tell you all the laws so that your head bursts listening to him. If you have a peso, he’ll save you,

even though you may be at the foot of the scaffold. When my friend Simon was put in jail and flogged for not being able to give evidence about a robbery perpetrated near his house, *abá*, for two reales and a half and a string of garlics, the town clerk got him out. And I saw Simon myself when [292]he could scarcely walk and he had to stay in bed at least a month. Ay, his flesh rotted as a result and he died!"

Sister Bali's advice was accepted and she herself volunteered to interview the town clerk. Juli gave her four reales and added some strips of jerked venison her grand-father had got, for Tandang Selo had again devoted himself to hunting.

But the town clerk could do nothing—the prisoner was in Manila, and his power did not extend that far. "If at least he were at the capital, then—" he ventured, to make a show of his authority, which he knew very well did not extend beyond the boundaries of Tiani, but he had to maintain his prestige and keep the jerked venison. "But I can give you a good piece of advice, and it is that you go with Juli to see the Justice of the Peace. But it's very necessary that Juli go."

The Justice of the Peace was a very rough fellow, but if he should see Juli he might conduct himself less rudely—this is wherein lay the wisdom of the advice.

With great gravity the honorable Justice listened to Sister Bali, who did the talking, but not without staring from time to time at the girl, who hung her head with shame. People would say that she was greatly interested in Basilio, people who did not remember her debt of gratitude, nor that his imprisonment, according to report, was on her account.

After belching three or four times, for his Honor had that ugly habit, he said that the only person who could save Basilio was Padre Camorra, *in case he should care to do so*. Here he stared meaningly at the girl and advised her to deal with the curate in person.

“You know what influence he has,—he got your grand-father out of jail. A report from him is enough to deport a new-born babe or save from death a man with the noose about his neck.”

Juli said nothing, but Sister Bali took this advice as though she had read it in a novena, and was ready to accompany the girl to the convento. It so happened

that [293]she was just going there to get as alms a scapulary in exchange for four full reales.

But Juli shook her head and was unwilling to go to the convento. Sister Bali thought she could guess the reason—Padre Camorra was reputed to be very fond of the women and was very frolicsome—so she tried to reassure her. “You’ve nothing to fear if I go with you. Haven’t you read in the booklet *Tandang Basio*, given you by the curate, that the girls should go to the convento, even without the knowledge of their elders, to relate what is going on at home? *Abá*, that book is printed with the permission of the Archbishop!”

Juli became impatient and wished to cut short such talk, so she begged the pious woman to go if she wished, but his Honor observed with a belch that the supplications of a youthful face were more moving than those of an old one, the sky poured its dew over the fresh flowers in greater abundance than over the withered ones. The metaphor was fiendishly beautiful.

Juli did not reply and the two left the house. In the street the girl firmly refused to go to the convento and they returned to their village. Sister Bali, who felt offended at this lack of confidence in herself, on

the way home relieved her feelings by administering a long preachment to the girl.

The truth was that the girl could not take that step without damning herself in her own eyes, besides being cursed of men and cursed of God! It had been intimated to her several times, whether with reason or not, that if she would make that sacrifice her father would be pardoned, and yet she had refused, in spite of the cries of her conscience reminding her of her filial duty. Now must she make it for Basilio, her sweetheart? That would be to fall to the sound of mockery and laughter from all creation. Basilio himself would despise her! No, never! She would first hang herself or leap from some precipice. At any rate, she was already damned for being a wicked daughter.

The poor girl had besides to endure all the reproaches [294]of her relatives, who, knowing nothing of what had passed between her and Padre Camovra, laughed at her fears. Would Padre Camorra fix his attention upon a country girl when there were so many others in the town? Hero the good women cited names of unmarried girls, rich and beautiful, who had been more or less unfortunate. Meanwhile, if they should shoot Basilio?

Juli covered her ears and stared wildly about, as if seeking a voice that might plead for her, but she saw only her grandfather, who was dumb and had his gaze fixed on his hunting-spear.

That night she scarcely slept at all. Dreams and nightmares, some funereal, some bloody, danced before her sight and woke her often, bathed in cold perspiration. She fancied that she heard shots, she imagined that she saw her father, that father who had done so much for her, fighting in the forests, hunted like a wild beast because she had refused to save him. The figure of her father was transformed and she recognized Basilio, dying, with looks of reproach at her. The wretched girl arose, prayed, wept, called upon her mother, upon death, and there was even a moment when, overcome with terror, if it had not been night-time, she would have run straight to the convento, let happen what would.

With the coming of day the sad presentiments and the terrors of darkness were partly dissipated. The light inspired hopes in her. But the news of the afternoon was terrible, for there was talk of persons shot, so the next night was for the girl frightful. In her desperation she decided to give herself up as soon as day dawned and then kill herself afterwards—

anything, rather than enditre such tortures! But the dawn brought new hope and she would not go to church or even leave the house. She was afraid she would yield.

So passed several days in praying and cursing, in calling upon God and wishing for death. The day gave her a slight respite and she trusted in some miracle. The reports that [295]came from Manila, although they reached there magnified, said that of the prisoners some had secured their liberty, thanks to patrons and influence. Some one had to be sacrificed —who would it be? Juli shuddered and returned home biting her finger-nails. Then came the night with its terrors, which took on double proportions and seemed to be converted into realities. Juli feared to fall asleep, for her slumbers were a continuous nightmare. Looks of reproach would flash across her eyelids just as soon as they were closed, complaints and laments pierced her ears. She saw her father wandering about hungry, without rest or repose; she saw Basilio dying in the road, pierced by two bullets, just as she had seen the corpse of that neighbor who had been killed while in the charge of the Civil Guard. She saw the bonds that cut into the flesh, she saw the blood pouring from the mouth, she heard

Basilio calling to her, “Save me! Save me! You alone can save me!” Then a burst of laughter would resound and she would turn her eyes to see her father gazing at her with eyes full of reproach. Juli would wake up, sit up on her *petate*, and draw her hands across her forehead to arrange her hair—cold sweat, like the sweat of death, moistened it!

“Mother, mother!” she sobbed.

Meanwhile, they who were so carelessly disposing of people’s fates, he who commanded the legal murders, he who violated justice and made use of the law to maintain himself by force, slept in peace.

At last a traveler arrived from Manila and reported that all the prisoners had been set free, all except Basilio, who had no protector. It was reported in Manila, added the traveler, that the young man would be deported to the Carolines, having been forced to sign a petition beforehand, in which he declared that he asked it voluntarily.[3] The [296]traveler had seen the very steamer that was going to take him away.

This report put an end to all the girl’s hesitation. Besides, her mind was already quite weak from so many nights of watching and horrible dreams. Pale and with unsteady eyes, she sought out Sister Bali

and, in a voice that was cause for alarm, told her that she was ready, asking her to accompany her. Sister Bali thereupon rejoiced and tried to soothe her, but Juli paid no attention to her, apparently intent only upon hurrying to the convento. She had decked herself out in her finest clothes, and even pretended to be quite gay, talking a great deal, although in a rather incoherent way.

So they set out. Juli went ahead, becoming impatient that her companion lagged behind. But as they neared the town, her nervous energy began gradually to abate, she fell silent and wavered in her resolution, lessened her pace and soon dropped behind, so that Sister Bali had to encourage her.

“We’ll get there late,” she remonstrated.

Juli now followed, pale, with downcast eyes, which she was afraid to raise. She felt that the whole world was staring at her and pointing its finger at her. A vile name whistled in her ears, but still she disregarded it and continued on her way. Nevertheless, when they came in sight of the convento, she stopped and began to tremble.

“Let’s go home, let’s go home,” she begged, holding her companion back.

Sister Bali had to take her by the arm and half drag her along, reassuring her and telling her about the books of the friars. She would not desert her, so there was nothing to fear. Padre Camorra had other things in mind—Juli was only a poor country girl.

But upon arriving at the door of the convento, Juli firmly refused to go in, catching hold of the wall.

“No, no,” she pleaded in terror. “No, no, no! Have pity!”[297]

“But what a fool—”

Sister Bali pushed her gently along, Juli, pallid and with wild features, offering resistance. The expression of her face said that she saw death before her.

“All right, let’s go back, if you don’t want to!” at length the good woman exclaimed in irritation, as she did not believe there was any real danger. Padre Camorra, in spite of all his reputation, would dare do nothing before her.

“Let them carry poor Basilio into exile, let them shoot him on the way, saying that he tried to escape,” she added. “When he’s dead, then remorse will come.

But as for myself, I owe him no favors, so he can't reproach me!"

That was the decisive stroke. In the face of that reproach, with wrath and desperation mingled, like one who rushes to suicide, Juli closed her eyes in order not to see the abyss into which she was hurling herself and resolutely entered the convento. A sigh that sounded like the rattle of death escaped from her lips. Sister Bali followed, telling her how to act.

That night comments were mysteriously whispered about certain events which had occurred that afternoon. A girl had leaped from a window of the convento, falling upon some stones and killing herself. Almost at the same time another woman had rushed out of the convento to run through the streets shouting and screaming like a lunatic. The prudent townsfolk dared not utter any names and many mothers pinched their daughters for letting slip expressions that might compromise them.

Later, very much later, at twilight, an old man came from a village and stood calling at the door of the convento, which was closed and guarded by sacristans. The old man beat the door with his fists and with his head, while he littered cries stifled and

inarticulate, like those of a dumb person, until he was at length driven away by blows and shoves. Then he made his way to the gobernadorcillo's house, but was told that the gobernadorcillo was not there, [298]he was at the convento; he went to the Justice of the Peace, but neither was the Justice of the Peace at home—he had been summoned to the convento; he went to the teniente-mayor, but he too was at the convento; he directed his steps to the barracks, but the lieutenant of the Civil Guard was at the convento. The old man then returned to his village, weeping like a child. His wails were heard in the middle of the night, causing men to bite their lips and women to clasp their hands, while the dogs slunk fearfully back into the houses with their tails between their legs.

"Ah, God, God!" said a poor woman, lean from fasting, "in Thy presence there is no rich, no poor, no white, no black—Thou wilt grant us justice!"

"Yes," rejoined her husband, "just so that God they preach is not a pure invention, a fraud! They themselves are the first not to believe in Him."

At eight o'clock in the evening it was rumored that more than seven friars, proceeding from neighboring towns, were assembled in the convento to hold a

conference. On the following day, Tandang Selo disappeared forever from the village, carrying with him his hunting-spear.[299]

[1] The native priests Burgos, Gomez, and Zamora, charged with complicity in the uprising of 1872, and executed.—Tr.

[2] This versicle, found in the booklets of prayer, is common on the scapularies, which, during the late insurrection, were easily converted into the *anting-anting*, or amulets, worn by the fanatics.—Tr.

[3] This practise—secretly compelling suspects to sign a request to be transferred to some other island—was by no means a figment of the author's imagination, but was extensively practised to anticipate any legal difficulties that might arise.—Tr.

The High Official

L’Espagne et sa, vertu, l’Espagne et sa grandeur
Tout s’en va!—Victor Hugo

The newspapers of Manila were so engrossed in accounts of a notorious murder committed in Europe, in panegyrics and puffs for various preachers in the city, in the constantly increasing success of the French operetta, that they could scarcely devote space to the crimes perpetrated in the provinces by a band of tulisanes headed by a fierce and terrible leader who was called *Matanglawin.*[1] Only when the object of the attack was a convento or a Spaniard there then appeared long articles giving frightful details and asking for martial law, energetic measures, and so on. So it was that they could take no notice of what had occurred in the town of Tiani, nor was there the slightest hint or allusion to it. In private circles something was whispered, but so confused, so vague, and so little consistent, that not even the name of the victim was known, while those who showed the greatest interest forgot it quickly, trusting that the affair had been settled in some way with the wronged family. The only one who knew anything certain was Padre Camorra, who had to leave the town, to be transferred to another or to remain for some time in the convento in Manila.

“Poor Padre Camorra!” exclaimed Ben-Zayb in a fit of generosity. “He was so jolly and had such a good heart!”

It was true that the students had recovered their liberty, [300]thanks to the exertions of their relatives, who did not hesitate at expense, gifts, or any sacrifice whatsoever. The first to see himself free, as was to be expected, was Makaraig, and the last Isagani, because Padre Florentine did not reach Manila until a week after the events. So many acts of clemency secured for the General the title of clement and merciful, which Ben-Zayb hastened to add to his long list of adjectives.

The only one who did not obtain his liberty was Basilio, since he was also accused of having in his possession prohibited books. We don’t know whether this referred to his text-book on legal medicine or to the pamphlets that were found, dealing with the Philippines, or both together—the fact is that it was said that prohibited literature was being secretly sold, and upon the unfortunate boy fell all the weight of the rod of justice.

It was reported that his Excellency had been thus advised: “It’s necessary that there be some one, so

that the prestige of authority may be sustained and that it may not be said that we made a great fuss over nothing. Authority before everything. It's necessary that some one be made an example of. Let there be just one, one who, according to Padre Irene, was the servant of Capitan Tiago—there'll be no one to enter a complaint—"

"Servant and student?" asked his Excellency. "That fellow, then! Let it be he!"

"Your Excellency will pardon me," observed the high official, who happened to be present, "but I've been told that this boy is a medical student and his teachers speak well of him. If he remains a prisoner he'll lose a year, and as this year he finishes—"

The high official's interference in behalf of Basilio, instead of helping, harmed him. For some time there had been between this official and his Excellency strained relations and bad feelings, augmented by frequent clashes.

"Yes? So much the greater reason that he should be kept prisoner; a year longer in his studies, instead of injuring [301]him, will do good, not only to himself but to all who afterwards fall into his hands. One doesn't become a bad physician by extensive practise. So

much the more reason that he should remain! Soon the filibustering reformers will say that we are not looking out for the country!" concluded his Excellency with a sarcastic laugh.

The high official realized that he had made a false move and took Basilio's case to heart. "But it seems to me that this young man is the most innocent of all," he rejoined rather timidly.

"Books have been seized in his possession," observed the secretary.

"Yes, works on medicine and pamphlets written by Peninsulars, with the leaves uncut, and besides, what does that signify? Moreover, this young man was not present at the banquet in the *pansitería*, he hasn't mixed up in anything. As I've said, he's the most innocent—"

"So much the better!" exclaimed his Excellency jocosely. "In that way the punishment will prove more salutary and exemplary, since it inspires greater terror. To govern is to act in this way, my dear sir, as it is often expedient to sacrifice the welfare of one to the welfare of many. But I'm doing more—from the welfare of one will result the welfare of all, the principle of endangered authority is preserved,

prestige is respected and maintained. By this act of mine I'm correcting my own and other people's faults."

The high official restrained himself with an effort and, disregarding the allusion, decided to take another tack. "But doesn't your Excellency fear the—responsibility?"

"What have I to fear?" rejoined the General impatiently. "Haven't I discretionary powers? Can't I do what I please for the better government of these islands? What have I to fear? Can some menial perhaps arraign me before the tribunals and exact from me responsibility? Even though he had the means, he would have to consult the Ministry first, and the Minister—"[302]

He waved his hand and burst out into laughter.

"The Minister who appointed me, the devil knows where he is, and he will feel honored in being able to welcome me when I return. The present one, I don't even think of him, and the devil take him too! The one that relieves him will find himself in so many difficulties with his new duties that he won't be able to fool with trifles. I, my dear sir, have nothing over me but my conscience, I act according to my

conscience, and my conscience is satisfied, so I don't care a straw for the opinions of this one and that. My conscience, my dear sir, my conscience!"

"Yes, General, but the country—"

"Tut, tut, tut, tut! The country—what have I to do Avith the country? Have I perhaps contracted any obligations to it? Do I owe my office to it? Was it the country that elected me?"

A brief pause ensued, during which the high official stood with bowed head. Then, as if reaching a decision, he raised it to stare fixedly at the General. Pale and trembling, he said with repressed energy: "That doesn't matter, General, that doesn't matter at all! Your Excellency has not been chosen by the Filipino people, but by Spain, all the more reason why you should treat the Filipinos well so that they may not be able to reproach Spain. The greater reason, General, the greater reason! Your Excellency, by coming here, has contracted the obligation to govern justly, to seek the welfare—"

"Am I not doing it?" interrupted his Excellency in exasperation, taking a step forward. "Haven't I told you that I am getting from the good of one the good of all? Are you now going to give me lessons? If you

don’t understand my actions, how am I to blame? Do I compel you to share my responsibility?”

“Certainly not,” replied the high official, drawing himself up proudly. “Your Excellency does not compel me, your Excellency cannot compel me, *me,* to share *your* responsibility. I understand mine in quite another way, [303]and because I have it, I’m going to speak—I’ve held my peace a long time. Oh, your Excellency needn’t make those gestures, because the fact that I’ve come here in this or that capacity doesn’t mean that I have given up my rights, that I have been reduced to the part of a slave, without voice or dignity.

“I don’t want Spain to lose this beautiful empire, these eight millions of patient and submissive subjects, who live on hopes and delusions, but neither do I wish to soil my hands in their barbarous exploitation. I don’t wish it ever to be said that, the slave-trade abolished, Spain has continued to cloak it with her banner and perfect it under a wealth of specious institutions. No, to be great Spain does not have to be a tyrant, Spain is sufficient unto herself, Spain was greater when she had only her own territory, wrested from the clutches of the Moor. I too am a Spaniard, but before being a Spaniard I am a

man, and before Spain and above Spain is her honor, the lofty principles of morality, the eternal principles of immutable justice! Ah, you are surprised that I think thus, because you have no idea of the grandeur of the Spanish name, no, you haven't any idea of it, you identify it with persons and interests. To you the Spaniard may be a pirate, he may be a murderer, a hypocrite, a cheat, anything, just so he keep what he has—but to me the Spaniard should lose everything, empire, power, wealth, everything, before his honor! Ah, my dear sir, we protest when we read that might is placed before right, yet we applaud when in practise we see might play the hypocrite in not only perverting right but even in using it as a tool in order to gain control. For the very reason that I love Spain, I'm speaking now, and I defy your frown!

"I don't wish that the coming ages accuse Spain of being the stepmother of the nations, the vampire of races, the tyrant of small islands, since it would be a horrible mockery of the noble principles of our ancient kings. How are we carrying out their sacred legacy? They promised to these [304]islands protection and justice, and we are playing with the lives and liberties of the inhabitants; they promised civilization, and^we are curtailing it, fearful that they

may aspire to a nobler existence; they promised them light, and we cover their eyes that they may not witness our orgies; they promised to teach them virtue and we are encouraging their vice. Instead of peace, wealth, and justice, confusion reigns, commerce languishes, and skepticism is fostered among the masses.

“Let us put ourselves in the place of the Filipinos and ask ourselves what we would do in their place. Ah, in your silence I read their right to rebel, and if matters do not mend they will rebel some day, and justice will be on their side, with them will go the sympathy of all honest men, of every patriot in the world! When a people is denied light, home, liberty, and justice—things that are essential to life, and therefore man’s patrimony—that people has the right to treat him who so despoils it as we would the robber who intercepts us on the highway. There are no distinctions, there are no exceptions, nothing but a fact, a right, an aggression, and every honest man who does not place himself on the side of the wronged makes himself an accomplice and stains his conscience.

“True, I am not a soldier, and the years are cooling the little fire in my blood, but just as I would risk

being torn to pieces to defend the integrity of Spain against any foreign invader or against an unjustified disloyalty in her provinces, so I also assure you that I would place myself beside the oppressed Filipinos, because I would prefer to fall in the cause of the outraged rights of humanity to triumphing with the selfish interests of a nation, even when that nation be called as it is called—Spain!"

"Do you know when the mail-boat leaves?" inquired his Excellency coldly, when the high official had finished speaking.

The latter stared at him fixedly, then dropped his head and silently left the palace.[305]

Outside he found his carriage awaiting him. "Some day when you declare yourselves independent," he said somewhat abstractedly to the native lackey who opened the carriage-door for him, "remember that there were not lacking in Spain hearts that beat for you and struggled for your rights!"

"Where, sir?" asked the lackey, who had understood nothing of this and was inquiring whither they should go.

Two hours later the high official handed in his resignation and announced his intention of returning

to Spain by the next mail-steamer.[306]

[1] “Hawk-Eye.”—Tr.

Effect of the Pasquinades

As a result of the events narrated, many mothers ordered their sons immediately to leave off their studies and devote themselves to idleness or to agriculture. When the examinations came, suspensions were plentiful, and he was a rare exception who finished the course, if he had belonged to the famous association, to which no one paid any more attention. Pecson, Tadeo, and Juanito Pelaez were all alike suspended—the first receiving his dismissal with his foolish grin and declaring his intention of becoming an officer in some court, while Tadeo, with his eternal holiday realized at last, paid for an illumination and made a bonfire of his books. Nor did the others get off much better, and at length they too had to abandon their studies, to the great satisfaction of their mothers, who always fancy their sons hanged if they should come to understand what the books teach. Juanito Pelaez alone took the blow ill, since it forced him to leave school for his father's store, with whom he was thenceforward to be associated in the business: the rascal found the store much less entertaining, but after some time his friends again noticed his hump appear, a symptom that his good humor was returning. The rich

Makaraig, in view of the catastrophe, took good care not to expose himself, and having secured a passport by means of money set out in haste for Europe. It was said that his Excellency, the Captain-General, in his desire to do good by good means, and careful of the interests of the Filipinos, hindered the departure of every one who could not first prove substantially that he had the money to spend and could live in idleness in European cities. Among our [307]acquaintances those who got off best were Isagani and Sandoval: the former passed in the subject he studied under Padre Fernandez and was suspended in the others, while the latter was able to confuse the examining-board with his oratory.

Basilio was the only one who did not pass in any subject, who was not suspended, and who did not go to Europe, for he remained in Bilibid prison, subjected every three days to examinations, almost always the same in principle, without other variation than a change of inquisitors, since it seemed that in the presence of such great guilt all gave up or fell away in horror. And while the documents moldered or were shifted about, while the stamped papers increased like the plasters of an ignorant physician on the body of a hypochondriac, Basilio became

informed of all the details of what had happened in Tiani, of the death of Juli and the disappearance of Tandang Selo. Sinong, the abused cochero, who had driven him to San Diego, happened to be in Manila at that time and called to give him all the news.

Meanwhile, Simoun had recovered his health, or so at least the newspapers said. Ben-Zayb rendered thanks to "the Omnipotent who watches over such a precious life," and manifested the hope that the Highest would some day reveal the malefactor, whose crime remained unpunished, thanks to the charity of the victim, who was too closely following the words of the Great Martyr: *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.* These and other things Ben-Zayb said in print, while by mouth he was inquiring whether there was any truth in the rumor that the opulent jeweler was going to give a grand fiesta, a banquet such as had never before been seen, in part to celebrate his recovery and in part as a farewell to the country in which he had increased his fortune. It was whispered as certain that Simoun, who would have to leave with the Captain-General, whose command expired in May, was making every effort to secure from Madrid an extension, [308]and that he was advising his Excellency to start a campaign in order

to have an excuse for remaining, but it was further reported that for the first time his Excellency had disregarded the advice of his favorite, making it a point of honor not to retain for a single additional day the power that had been conferred upon him, a rumor which encouraged belief that the fiesta announced would take place; very soon. For the rest, Simoun remained unfathomable, since he had become very uncommunicative, showed himself seldom, and smiled mysteriously when the rumored fiesta was mentioned.

“Come, Señor Sindbad,” Ben-Zayb had once rallied him, “dazzle us with something Yankee! You owe something to this country.”

“Doubtless!” was Simoun’s response, with a dry smile.

“You’ll throw the house wide open, eh?”

“Maybe, but as I have no house—”

“You ought to have secured Capitan Tiago’s, which Señor Pelaez got for nothing.”

Simoun became silent, and from that time on he was often seen in the store of Don Timoteo Pelaez, with whom it was said he had entered into partnership.

Some weeks afterward, in the month of April, it was rumored that Juanito Pelaez, Don Timoteo's son, was going to marry Paulita Gomez, the girl coveted by Spaniards and foreigners.

"Some men are lucky!" exclaimed other envious merchants. "To buy a house for nothing, sell his consignment of galvanized iron well, get into partnership with a Simoun, and marry his son to a rich heiress—just say if those aren't strokes of luck that all honorable men don't have!"

"If you only knew whence came that luck of Señor Pelaez's!" another responded, in a tone which indicated that the speaker did know. "It's also assured that there'll be a fiesta and on a grand scale," was added with mystery.

It was really true that Paulita was going to marry [309]Juanito Pelaez. Her love for Isagani had gradually waned, like all first loves based on poetry and sentiment. The events of the pasquinades and the imprisonment of the youth had shorn him of all his charms. To whom would it have occurred to seek danger, to desire to share the fate of his comrades, to surrender himself, when every one was hiding and denying any complicity in the affair? It was quixotic,

it was madness that no sensible person in Manila could pardon, and Juanito was quite right in ridiculing him, representing what a sorry figure he cut when he went to the Civil Government. Naturally, the brilliant Paulita could no longer love a young man who so erroneously understood social matters and whom all condemned. Then she began to reflect. Juanito was clever, capable, gay, shrewd, the son of a rich merchant of Manila, and a Spanish mestizo besides—if Don Timoteo was to be believed, a full-blooded Spaniard. On the other hand, Isagani was a provincial native who dreamed of forests infested with leeches, he was of doubtful family, with a priest for an uncle, who would perhaps be an enemy to luxury and balls, of which she was very fond. One beautiful morning therefore it occurred to her that she had been a downright fool to prefer him to his rival, and from that time on Pelaez's hump steadily increased. Unconsciously, yet rigorously, Paulita was obeying the law discovered by Darwin, that the female surrenders herself to the fittest male, to him who knows how to adapt himself to the medium in which he lives, and to live in Manila there was no other like Pelaez, who from his infancy had had chicanery at his finger-tips. Lent passed with its Holy Week, its array of processions and pompous displays,

without other novelty than a mysterious mutiny among the artillerymen, the cause of which was never disclosed. The houses of light materials were torn down in the presence of a troop of cavalry, ready to fall upon the owners in case they should offer resistance. There was a great deal of weeping and many lamentations, but the affair did not get beyond that. The curious, among [310]them Simoun, went to see those who were left homeless, walking about indifferently and assuring each other that thenceforward they could sleep in peace.

Towards the end of April, all the fears being now forgotten, Manila was engrossed with one topic: the fiesta that Don Timoteo Pelaez was going to celebrate at the wedding of his son, for which the General had graciously and condescendingly agreed to be the patron. Simoun was reported to have arranged the matter. The ceremony would be solemnized two days before the departure of the General, who would honor the house and make a present to the bridegroom. It was whispered that the jeweler would pour out cascades of diamonds and throw away handfuls of pearls in honor of his partner's son, thus, since he could hold no fiesta of his own, as he was a bachelor and had no house,

improving the opportunity to dazzle the Filipino people with a memorable farewell. All Manila prepared to be invited, and never did uneasiness take stronger hold of the mind than in view of the thought of not being among those bidden. Friendship with Simoun became a matter of dispute, and many husbands were forced by their wives to purchase bars of steel and sheets of galvanized iron in order to make friends with Don Timoteo Pelaez.[311]

La Ultima Razón[1]

At last the great day arrived. During the morning Simoun had not left his house, busied as he was in packing his arms and his jewels. His fabulous wealth was already locked up in the big steel chest with its canvas cover, there remaining only a few cases containing bracelets and pins, doubtless gifts that he meant to make. He was going to leave with the Captain-General, who cared in no way to lengthen his stay, fearful of what people would say. Malicious ones insinuated that Simoun did not dare remain alone, since without the General's support he did not care to expose himself to the vengeance of the many wretches he had exploited, all the more reason for which was the fact that the General who was coming was reported to be a model of rectitude and might make him disgorge his gains. The superstitious Indians, on the other hand, believed that Simoun was the devil who did not wish to separate himself from his prey. The pessimists winked maliciously and said, "The field laid waste, the locust leaves for other parts!" Only a few, a very few, smiled and said nothing.

In the afternoon Simoun had given orders to his servant that if there appeared a young man calling

himself Basilio he should be admitted at once. Then he shut himself up in his room and seemed to become lost in deep thought. Since his illness the jeweler's countenance had become harder and gloomier, while the wrinkles between his eyebrows had [312]deepened greatly. He did not hold himself so erect as formerly, and his head was bowed.

So absorbed was he in his meditations that he did not hear a knock at the door, and it had to be repeated. He shuddered and called out, "Come in!"

It was Basilio, but how altered! If the change that had taken place in Simoun during those two months was great, in the young student it was frightful. His cheeks were hollow, his hair unkempt, his clothing disordered. The tender melancholy had disappeared from his eyes, and in its place glittered a dark light, so that it might be said that he had died and his corpse had revived, horrified with what it had seen in eternity. If not crime, then the shadow of crime, had fixed itself upon his whole appearance. Simoun himself was startled and felt pity for the wretch.

Without any greeting Basilio slowly advanced into the room, and in a voice that made the jeweler shudder said to him, "Señor Simoun, I've been a

wicked son and a bad brother—I've overlooked the murder of one and the tortures of the other, and God has chastised me! Now there remains to me only one desire, and it is to return evil for evil, crime for crime, violence for violence!"

Simoun listened in silence, while Basilio continued; "Four months ago you talked to me about your plans. I refused to take part in them, but I did wrong, you have been right. Three months and a half ago the revolution was on the point of breaking out, but I did not then care to participate in it, and the movement failed. In payment for my conduct I've been arrested and owe my liberty to your efforts only. You are right and now I've come to say to you: put a weapon in my hand and let the revolution come! I am ready to serve you, along with all the rest of the unfortunates."

The cloud that had darkened Simoun's brow suddenly disappeared, a ray of triumph darted from his eyes, and like one who has found what he sought he exclaimed: "I'm right, yes, I'm right! Right and Justice are on my side, because [313]my cause is that of the persecuted. Thanks, young man, thanks! You've come to clear away my doubts, to end my hesitation."

He had risen and his face was beaming. The zeal that had animated him when four months before he had explained his plans to Basilio in the wood of his ancestors reappeared in his countenance like a red sunset after a cloudy day.

“Yes,” he resumed, “the movement failed and many have deserted me because they saw me disheartened and wavering at the supreme moment. I still cherished something in my heart, I was not the master of all my feelings, I still loved! Now everything is dead in me, no longer is there even a corpse sacred enough for me to respect its sleep. No longer will there be any vacillation, for you yourself, an idealistic youth, a gentle dove, understand the necessity and come to spur me to action. Somewhat late you have opened your eyes, for between you and me together we might have executed marvelous plans, I above in the higher circles spreading death amid perfume and gold, brutalizing the vicious and corrupting or paralyzing the few good, and you below among the people, among the young men, stirring them to life amid blood and tears. Our task, instead of being bloody and barbarous, would have been holy, perfect, artistic, and surely success would have crowned our efforts. But no intelligence would

support me, I encountered fear or effeminacy among the enlightened classes, selfishness among the rich, simplicity among the youth, and only in the mountains, in the waste places, among the outcasts, have I found my men. But no matter now! If we can't get a finished statue, rounded out in all its details, of the rough block we work upon let those to come take charge!"

Seizing the arm of Basilio, who was listening without comprehending all he said, he led him to the laboratory where he kept his chemical mixtures. Upon the table was placed a large case made of dark shagreen, similar to those [314]that hold the silver plate exchanged as gifts among the rich and powerful. Opening this, Simoun revealed to sight, upon a bottom of red satin, a lamp of very peculiar shape, Its body was in the form of a pomegranate as large as a man's head, with fissures in it exposing to view the seeds inside, which were fashioned of enormous carnelians. The covering was of oxidized gold in exact imitation of the wrinkles on the fruit.

Simoun took it out with great care and, removing the burner, exposed to view the interior of the tank, which was lined with steel two centimeters in thickness and which had a capacity of over a liter.

Basilio questioned him with his eyes, for as yet he comprehended nothing. Without entering upon explanations, Simoun carefully took from a cabinet a flask and showed the young man the formula written upon it.

“Nitro-glycerin!” murmured Basilio, stepping backward and instinctively thrusting his hands behind him. “Nitro-glycerin! Dynamite!” Beginning now to understand, he felt his hair stand on end.

“Yes, nitro-glycerin!” repeated Simoun slowly, with his cold smile and a look of delight at the glass flask. “It’s also something more than nitro-glycerin—it’s concentrated tears, repressed hatred, wrongs, injustice, outrage. It’s the last resort of the weak, force against force, violence against violence. A moment ago I was hesitating, but you have come and decided me. This night the most dangerous tyrants will be blown to pieces, the irresponsible rulers that hide themselves behind God and the State, whose abuses remain unpunished because no one can bring them to justice. This night the Philippines will hear the explosion that will convert into rubbish the formless monument whose decay I have fostered.”

Basilio was so terrified that his lips worked without producing any sound, his tongue was paralyzed, his throat parched. For the first time he was looking at the powerful liquid which he had heard talked of as a thing distilled [315]in gloom by gloomy men, in open war against society. Now he had it before him, transparent and slightly yellowish, poured with great caution into the artistic pomegranate. Simoun looked to him like the jinnee of the *Arabian Nights* that sprang from the sea, he took on gigantic proportions, his head touched the sky, he made the house tremble and shook the whole city with a shrug of his shoulders. The pomegranate assumed the form of a colossal sphere, the fissures became hellish grins whence escaped names and glowing cinders. For the first time in his life Basilio was overcome with fright and completely lost his composure.

Simoun, meanwhile, screwed on solidly a curious and complicated mechanism, put in place a glass chimney, then the bomb, and crowned the whole with an elegant shade. Then he moved away some distance to contemplate the effect, inclining his head now to one side, now to the other, thus better to appreciate its magnificent appearance.

Noticing that Basilio was watching him with questioning and suspicious eyes, he said, “Tonight there will be a fiesta and this lamp will be placed in a little dining-kiosk that I’ve had constructed for the purpose. The lamp will give a brilliant light, bright enough to suffice for the illumination of the whole place by itself, but at the end of twenty minutes the light will fade, and then when some one tries to turn up the wick a cap of fulminate of mercury will explode, the pomegranate will blow up and with it the dining-room, in the roof and floor of which I have concealed sacks of powder, so that no one shall escape.”

There wras a moment’s silence, while Simoun stared at his mechanism and Basilio scarcely breathed.

“So my assistance is not needed,” observed the young man.

“No, you have another mission to fulfill,” replied Simoun thoughtfully. “At nine the mechanism will have exploded and the report will have been heard in the country round, in the mountains, in the caves. The uprising that I had arranged with the artillerymen was a failure from lack [316]of plan and timeliness, but this time it won’t be so. Upon hearing the explosion, the

wretched and the oppressed, those who wander about pursued by force, will sally forth armed to join Cabesang Tales in Santa Mesa, whence they will fall upon the city,[2] while the soldiers, whom I have made to believe that the General is shamming an insurrection in order to remain, will issue from their barracks ready to fire upon whomsoever I may designate. Meanwhile, the cowed populace, thinking that the hour of massacre has come, will rush out prepared to kill or be killed, and as they have neither arms nor organization, you with some others will put yourself at their head and direct them to the warehouses of Quiroga, where I keep my rifles. Cabesang Tales and I will join one another in the city and take possession of it, while you in the suburbs will seize the bridges and throw up barricades, and then be ready to come to our aid to butcher not only those opposing the revolution but also every man who refuses to take up arms and join us."

"All?" stammered Basilio in a choking voice.

"All!" repeated Simoun in a sinister tone. "All—Indians, mestizos, Chinese, Spaniards, all who are found to be without courage, without energy. The race must be renewed! Cowardly fathers will only breed slavish sons, and it wouldn't be worth while to

destroy and then try to rebuild with rotten materials. What, do you shudder? Do you tremble, do you fear to scatter death? What is death? What does a hecatomb of twenty thousand wretches signify? Twenty thousand miseries less, and millions of wretches saved from birth! The most timid ruler does not [317]hesitate to dictate a law that produces misery and lingering death for thousands and thousands of prosperous and industrious subjects, happy perchance, merely to satisfy a caprice, a whim, his pride, and yet you shudder because in one night are to be ended forever the mental tortures of many helots, because a vitiated and paralytic people has to die to give place to another, young, active, full of energy!

“What is death? Nothingness, or a dream? Can its specters be compared to the reality of the agonies of a whole miserable generation? The needful thing is to destroy the evil, to kill the dragon and bathe the new people in the blood, in order to make it strong and invulnerable. What else is the inexorable law of Nature, the law of strife in which the weak has to succumb so that the vitiated species be not perpetuated and creation thus travel backwards? Away then with effeminate scruples! Fulfill the

eternal laws, foster them, and then the earth will be so much the more fecund the more it is fertilized with blood, and the thrones the more solid the more they rest upon crimes and corpses. Let there be no hesitation, no doubtings! What is the pain of death? A momentary sensation, perhaps confused, perhaps agreeable, like the transition from waking to sleep. What is it that is being destroyed? Evil, suffering—feeble weeds, in order to set in their place luxuriant plants. Do you call that destruction? I should call it creating, producing, nourishing, vivifying!”

Such bloody sophisms, uttered with conviction and coolness, overwhelmed the youth, weakened as he was by more than three months in prison and blinded by his passion for revenge, so he was not in a mood to analyze the moral basis of the matter. Instead of replying that the worst and cowardliest of men is always something more than a plant, because he has a soul and an intelligence, which, however vitiated and brutalized they may be, can be redeemed; instead of replying that man has no right to dispose of one life for the benefit of another, that the right to life is inherent in every individual like the right to liberty and to [318]light; instead of replying that if it is an abuse on the part of governments to punish in a

culprit the faults and crimes to which they have driven him by their own negligence or stupidity, how much more so would it be in a man, however great and however unfortunate he might be, to punish in a wretched people the faults of its governments and its ancestors; instead of declaring that God alone can use such methods, that God can destroy because He can create, God who holds in His hands recompense, eternity, and the future, to justify His acts, and man never; instead of these reflections, Basilio merely interposed a cant reflection.

“What will the world say at the sight of such butchery?”

“The world will applaud, as usual, conceding the right of the strongest, the most violent!” replied Simoun with his cruel smile. “Europe applauded when the western nations sacrificed millions of Indians in America, and not by any means to found nations much more moral or more pacific: there is the North with its egotistic liberty, its lynch-law, its political frauds—the South with its turbulent republics, its barbarous revolutions, civil wars, pronunciamientos, as in its mother Spain! Europe applauded when the powerful Portugal despoiled the Moluccas, it applauds while England is destroying

the primitive races in the Pacific to make room for its emigrants. Europe will applaud as the end of a drama, the close of a tragedy, is applauded, for the vulgar do not fix their attention on principles, they look only at results. Commit the crime well, and you will be admired and have more partizans than if you had carried out virtuous actions with modesty and timidity."

"Exactly," rejoined the youth, "what does it matter to me, after all, whether they praise or censure, when this world takes no care of the oppressed, of the poor, and of weak womankind? What obligations have I to recognize toward society when it has recognized none toward me?"

"That's what I like to hear," declared the tempter triumphantly. [319]He took a revolver from a case and gave it to Basilio, saying, "At ten o'clock wait for me in front of the church of St. Sebastian to receive my final instructions. Ah, at nine you must be far, very far from Calle Anloague."

Basilio examined the weapon, loaded it, and placed it in the inside pocket of his coat, then took his leave with a curt, "I'll see you later."[320]

[1] Ultima Razón de Reyes: the last argument of kings—force. (Expression attributed to Calderon de la Barca, the great Spanish dramatist.)—Tr.

[2] Curiously enough, and by what must have been more than a mere coincidence, this route through Santa Mesa from San Juan del Monte was the one taken by an armed party in their attempt to enter the city at the outbreak of the Katipunan rebellion on the morning of August 30, 1896. (Foreman's *The Philippine Islands*, Chap. XXVI.)

It was also on the bridge connecting these two places that the first shot in the insurrection against American sovereignty was fired on the night of February 4, 1899.—Tr.

The Wedding

Once in the street, Basilio began to consider how he might spend the time until the fatal hour arrived, for it was then not later than seven o'clock. It was the vacation period and all the students were back in their towns, Isagani being the only one who had not cared to leave, but he had disappeared that morning and no one knew his whereabouts—so Basilio had been informed when after leaving the prison he had gone to visit his friend and ask him for lodging. The young man did not know where to go, for he had no money, nothing but the revolver. The memory of the lamp filled his imagination, the great catastrophe that would occur within two hours. Pondering over this, he seemed to see the men who passed before his eyes walking without heads, and he felt a thrill of ferocious joy in telling himself that, hungry and destitute, he that night was going to be dreaded, that from a poor student and servant, perhaps the sun would see him transformed into some one terrible and sinister, standing upon pyramids of corpses, dictating laws to all those who were passing before his gaze now in magnificent carriages. He laughed like one condemned to death and patted the butt of

the revolver. The boxes of cartridges were also in his pockets.

A question suddenly occurred to him—where would the drama begin? In his bewilderment he had not thought of asking Simoun, but the latter had warned him to keep away from Calle Anloague. Then came a suspicion: that afternoon, upon leaving the prison, he had proceeded to the former house of Capitan Tiago to get his few personal effects and had found it transformed, prepared for a fiesta[321]—the wedding of Juanito Pelaez! Simoun had spoken of a fiesta.

At this moment he noticed passing in front of him a long line of carriages filled with ladies and gentlemen, conversing in a lively manner, and he even thought he could make out big bouquets of flowers, but he gave the detail no thought. The carriages were going toward Calle Rosario and in meeting those that came down off the Bridge of Spain had to move along slowly and stop frequently. In one he saw Juanito Pelaez at the side of a woman dressed in white with a transparent veil, in whom he recognized Paulita Gomez.

“Paulita!” he ejaculated in surprise, realizing that it was indeed she, in a bridal gown, along with Juanito

Pelaez, as though they were just coming from the church. “Poor Isagani!” he murmured, “what can have become of him?”

He thought for a while about his friend, a great and generous soul, and mentally asked himself if it would not be well to tell him about the plan, then answered himself that Isagani would never take part in such a butchery. They had not treated Isagani as they had him.

Then he thought that had there been no imprisonment, he would have been betrothed, or a husband, at this time, a licentiate in medicine, living and working in some corner of his province. The ghost of Juli, crushed in her fall, crossed his mind, and dark flames of hatred lighted his eyes; again he caressed the butt of the revolver, regretting that the terrible hour had not yet come. Just then he saw Simoun come out of the door of his house, carrying in his hands the case containing the lamp, carefully wrapped up, and enter a carriage, which then followed those bearing the bridal party. In order not to lose track of Simoun, Basilio took a good look at the cochero and with astonishment recognized in him the wretch who had driven him to San Diego, Sinong, the fellow maltreated by the Civil Guard, the same

who had come to the prison to tell him about the occurrences in Tiani.[322]

Conjecturing that Calle Anloague was to be the scene of action, thither the youth directed his steps, hurrying forward and getting ahead of the carriages, which were, in fact, all moving toward the former house of Capitan Tiago—there they were assembling in search of a ball, but actually to dance in the air! Basilio smiled when he noticed the pairs of civil-guards who formed the escort, and from their number he could guess the importance of the fiesta and the guests. The house overflowed with people and poured floods of light from its windows, the entrance was carpeted and strewn with flowers. Upstairs there, perhaps in his former solitary room, an orchestra was playing lively airs, which did not completely drown the confused tumult of talk and laughter.

Don Timoteo Pelaez was reaching the pinnacle of fortune, and the reality surpassed his dreams. He was, at last, marrying his son to the rich Gomez heiress, and, thanks to the money Simoun had lent him, he had royally furnished that big house, purchased for half its value, and was giving in it a splendid fiesta, with the foremost divinities of the Manila Olympus for his guests, to gild him with the light of their

prestige. Since that morning there had been recurring to him, with the persistence of a popular song, some vague phrases that he had read in the communion service. “Now has the fortunate hour come! Now draws nigh the happy moment! Soon there will be fulfilled in you the admirable words of Simoun—‘I live, and yet not I alone, but the Captain-General liveth in me.’” The Captain-General the patron of his son! True, he had not attended the ceremony, where Don Custodio had represented him, but he would come to dine, he would bring a wedding-gift, a lamp which not even Aladdin’s—between you and me, Simoun was presenting the lamp. Timoteo, what more could you desire?

The transformation that Capitan Tiago’s house had undergone was considerable—it had been richly repapered, while the smoke and the smell of opium had been completely [323]eradicated. The immense sala, widened still more by the colossal mirrors that infinitely multiplied the lights of the chandeliers, was carpeted throughout, for the salons of Europe had carpets, and even though the floor was of wide boards brilliantly polished, a carpet it must have too, since nothing should be lacking. The rich furniture of Capitan Tiago had disappeared and in its place was to

be seen another kind, in the style of Louis XV. Heavy curtains of red velvet, trimmed with gold, with the initials of the bridal couple worked on them, and upheld by garlands of artificial orange-blossoms, hung as portières and swept the floor with their wide fringes, likewise of gold. In the corners appeared enormous Japanese vases, alternating with those of Sèvres of a clear dark-blue, placed upon square pedestals of carved wood.

The only decorations not in good taste were the screaming chromos which Don Timoteo had substituted for the old drawings and pictures of saints of Capitan Tiago. Simoun had been unable to dissuade him, for the merchant did not want oil-paintings—some one might ascribe them to Filipino artists! He, a patron of Filipino artists, never! On that point depended his peace of mind and perhaps his life, and he knew how to get along in the Philippines! It is true that he had heard foreign painters mentioned —Raphael, Murillo, Velasquez—but he did not know their addresses, and then they might prove to be somewhat seditious. With the chromos he ran no risk, as the Filipinos did not make them, they came cheaper, the effect was the same, if not better, the colors brighter and the execution very fine. Don’t say

that Don Timoteo did not know how to comport himself in the Philippines!

The large hallway was decorated with flowers, having been converted into a dining-room, with a long table for thirty persons in the center, and around the sides, pushed against the walls, other smaller ones for two or three persons each. Bouquets of flowers, pyramids of fruits among ribbons and lights, covered their centers. The groom's place was designated [324]by a bunch of roses and the bride's by another of orange-blossoms and tuberoses. In the presence of so much finery and flowers one could imagine that nymphs in gauzy garments and Cupids with iridescent wings were going to serve nectar and ambrosia to aerial guests, to the sound of lyres and Aeolian harps.

But the table for the greater gods was not there, being placed yonder in the middle of the wide azotea within a magnificent kiosk constructed especially for the occasion. A lattice of gilded wood over which clambered fragrant vines screened the interior from the eyes of the vulgar without impeding the free circulation of air to preserve the coolness necessary at that season. A raised platform lifted the table above the level of the others at which the ordinary

mortals were going to dine and an arch decorated by the best artists would protect the august heads from the jealous gaze of the stars.

On this table were laid only seven plates. The dishes were of solid silver, the cloth and napkins of the finest linen, the wines the most costly and exquisite. Don Timoteo had sought the most rare and expensive in everything, nor would he have hesitated at crime had he been assured that the Captain-General liked to eat human flesh.[325]

The Fiesta

“Danzar sobre un volcán.”

By seven in the evening the guests had begun to arrive: first, the lesser divinities, petty government officials, clerks, and merchants, with the most ceremonious greetings and the gravest airs at the start, as if they were parvenus, for so much light, so many decorations, and so much glassware had some effect. Afterwards, they began to be more at ease, shaking their fists playfully, with pats on the shoulders, and even familiar slaps on the back. Some, it is true, adopted a rather disdainful air, to let it be seen that they were accustomed to better things—of course they were! There was one goddess who yawned, for she found everything vulgar and even remarked that she was ravenously hungry, while another quarreled with her god, threatening to box his ears.

Don Timoteo bowed here and bowed there, scattered his best smiles, tightened his belt, stepped backward, turned halfway round, then completely around, and so on again and again, until one goddess could not refrain from remarking to her neighbor, under cover of her fan: “My dear, how important the old man is! Doesn’t he look like a jumping-jack?”

Later came the bridal couple, escorted by Doña Victorina and the rest of the party. Congratulations, hand-shakings, patronizing pats for the groom: for the bride, insistent stares and anatomical observations on the part of the men, with analyses of her gown, her toilette, speculations as to her health and strength on the part of the women.[326]

"Cupid and Psyche appearing on Olympus," thought Ben-Zayb, making a mental note of the comparison to spring it at some better opportunity. The groom had in fact the mischievous features of the god of love, and with a little good-will his hump, which the severity of his frock coat did not altogether conceal, could be taken for a quiver.

Don Timoteo began to feel his belt squeezing him, the corns on his feet began to ache, his neck became tired, but still the General had not come. The greater gods, among them Padre Irene and Padre Salvi, had already arrived, it was true, but the chief thunderer was still lacking. The poor man became uneasy, nervous; his heart beat violently, but still he had to bow and smile; he sat down, he arose, failed to hear what was said to him, did not say what he meant. In the meantime, an amateur god made remarks to him

about his chromos, criticizing them with the statement that they spoiled the walls.

“Spoil the walls!” repeated Don Timoteo, with a smile and a desire to choke him. “But they were made in Europe and are the most costly I could get in Manila! Spoil the walls!” Don Timoteo swore to himself that on the very next day he would present for payment all the chits that the critic had signed in his store.

Whistles resounded, the galloping of horses was heard—at last! “The General! The Captain-General!”

Pale with emotion, Don Timoteo, dissembling the pain of his corns and accompanied by his son and some of the greater gods, descended to receive the Mighty Jove. The pain at his belt vanished before the doubts that now assailed him: should he frame a smile or affect gravity; should he extend his hand or wait for the General to offer his? *Carambas!* Why had nothing of this occurred to him before, so that he might have consulted his good friend Simoun?

To conceal his agitation, he whispered to his son in a low, shaky voice, “Have you a speech prepared?”[327]

“Speeches are no longer in vogue, papa, especially on such an occasion as this.”

Jupiter arrived in the company of Juno, who was converted into a tower of artificial lights—with diamonds in her hair, diamonds around her neck, on her arms, on her shoulders, she was literally covered with diamonds. She was arrayed in a magnificent silk gown having a long train decorated with embossed flowers.

His Excellency literally took possession of the house, as Don Timoteo stammeringly begged him to do.[1] The orchestra played the royal march while the divine couple majestically ascended the carpeted stairway.

Nor was his Excellency's gravity altogether affected. Perhaps for the first time since his arrival in the islands he felt sad, a strain of melancholy tinged his thoughts. This was the last triumph of his three years of government, and within two days he would descend forever from such an exalted height. What was he leaving behind? His Excellency did not care to turn his head backwards, but preferred to look ahead, to gaze into the future. Although he was carrying away a fortune, large sums to his credit were awaiting him in European banks, and he had residences, yet he had injured many, he had made enemies at the Court, the high official was waiting

for him there. Other Generals had enriched themselves as rapidly as he, and now they were ruined. Why not stay longer, as Simoun had advised him to do? No, good taste before everything else. The bows, moreover, were not now so profound as before, he noticed insistent stares and even looks of dislike, but still he replied affably and even attempted to smile.

“It’s plain that the sun is setting,” observed Padre Irene in Ben-Zayb’s ear. “Many now stare him in the face.”

The devil with the curate—that was just what he was going to remark![328]

“My dear,” murmured into the ear of a neighbor the lady who had referred to Don Timoteo as a jumping-jack, “did you ever see such a skirt?”

“Ugh, the curtains from the Palace!”

“You don’t say! But it’s true! They’re carrying everything away. You’ll see how they make wraps out of the carpets.”

“That only goes to show that she has talent and taste,” observed her husband, reproving her with a

look. “Women should be economical.” This poor god was still suffering from the dressmaker’s bill.

“My dear, give me curtains at twelve pesos a yard, and you’ll see if I put on these rags!” retorted the goddess in pique. “Heavens! You can talk when you have done something fine like that to give you the right!”

Meanwhile, Basilio stood before the house, lost in the throng of curious spectators, counting those who alighted from their carriages. When he looked upon so many persons, happy and confident, when he saw the bride and groom followed by their train of fresh and innocent little girls, and reflected that they were going to meet there a horrible death, he was sorry and felt his hatred waning within him. He wanted to save so many innocents, he thought of notifying the police, but a carriage drove up to set down Padre Salvi and Padre Irene, both beaming with content, and like a passing cloud his good intentions vanished. “What does it matter to me?” he asked himself. “Let the righteous suffer with the sinners.”

Then he added, to silence his scruples: “I’m not an informer, I mustn’t abuse the confidence he has placed in me. I owe him, *him* more than I do *them*: he

dug my mother’s grave, they killed her! What have I to do with them? I did everything possible to be good and useful, I tried to forgive and forget, I suffered every imposition, and only asked that they leave me in peace. I got in no one’s way. What have they done to me? Let their mangled limbs fly through the air! We’ve suffered enough.”[329]

Then he saw Simoun alight with the terrible lamp in his hands, saw him cross the entrance with bowed head, as though deep in thought. Basilio felt his heart beat fainter, his feet and hands turn cold, while the black silhouette of the jeweler assumed fantastic shapes enveloped in flames. There at the foot of the stairway Simoun checked his steps, as if in doubt, and Basilio held his breath. But the hesitation was transient—Simoun raised his head, resolutely ascended the stairway, and disappeared.

It then seemed to the student that the house was going to blow up at any moment, and that walls, lamps, guests, roof, windows, orchestra, would be hurtling through the air like a handful of coals in the midst of an infernal explosion. He gazed about him and fancied that he saw corpses in place of idle spectators, he saw them torn to shreds, it seemed to him that the air was filled with flames, but his calmer

self triumphed over this transient hallucination, which was due somewhat to his hunger.

“Until he comes out, there’s no danger,” he said to himself. “The Captain-General hasn’t arrived yet.”

He tried to appear calm and control the convulsive trembling in his limbs, endeavoring to divert his thoughts to other things. Something within was ridiculing him, saying, “If you tremble now, before the supreme moment, how will you conduct yourself when you see blood flowing, houses burning, and bullets whistling?”

His Excellency arrived, but the young man paid no attention to him. He was watching the face of Simoun, who was among those that descended to receive him, and he read in that implacable countenance the sentence of death for all those men, so that fresh terror seized upon him. He felt cold, he leaned against the wall, and, with his eyes fixed on the windows and his ears cocked, tried to guess what might be happening. In the sala he saw the crowd surround Simoun to look at the lamp, he heard congratulations and exclamations of admiration—the words “dining-room,” “novelty,” were repeated many times—he saw [330]the General smile and conjectured

that the novelty was to be exhibited that very night, by the jeweler's arrangement, on the table whereat his Excellency was to dine. Simoun disappeared, followed by a crowd of admirers.

At that supreme moment his good angel triumphed, he forgot his hatreds, he forgot Juli, he wanted to save the innocent. Come what might, he would cross the street and try to enter. But Basilio had forgotten that he was miserably dressed. The porter stopped him and accosted him roughly, and finally, upon his insisting, threatened to call the police.

Just then Simoun came down, slightly pale, and the porter turned from Basilio to salute the jeweler as though he had been a saint passing. Basilio realized from the expression of Simoun's face that he was leaving the fated house forever, that the lamp was lighted.*Alea jacta est!* Seized by the instinct of self-preservation, he thought then of saving himself. It might occur to any of the guests through curiosity to tamper with the wick and then would come the explosion to overwhelm them all. Still he heard Simoun say to the cochero, "The Escolta, hurry!"

Terrified, dreading that he might at any moment hear the awful explosion, Basilio hurried as fast as his legs

would carry him to get away from the accursed spot, but his legs seemed to lack the necessary agility, his feet slipped on the sidewalk as though they were moving but not advancing. The people he met blocked the way, and before he had gone twenty steps he thought that at least five minutes had elapsed.

Some distance away he stumbled against a young man who was standing with his head thrown back, gazing fixedly at the house, and in him he recognized Isagani. “What are you doing here?” he demanded. “Come away!”

Isagani stared at him vaguely, smiled sadly, and again turned his gaze toward the open balconies, across which was revealed the ethereal silhouette of the bride clinging to the groom’s arm as they moved slowly out of sight.[331]

“Come, Isagani, let’s get away from that house. Come!” Basilio urged in a hoarse voice, catching his friend by the arm.

Isagani gently shook himself free and continued to stare with the same sad smile upon his lips.

“For God’s sake, let’s get away from here!”

“Why should I go away? Tomorrow it will not be she.”

There was so much sorrow in those words that Basilio for a moment forgot his own terror. “Do you want to die?” he demanded.

Isagani shrugged his shoulders and continued to gaze toward the house.

Basilio again tried to drag him away. “Isagani, Isagani, listen to me! Let’s not waste any time! That house is mined, it’s going to blow up at any moment, by the least imprudent act, the least curiosity! Isagani, all will perish in its ruins.”

“In its ruins?” echoed Isagani, as if trying to understand, but without removing his gaze from the window.

“Yes, in its ruins, yes, Isagani! For God’s sake, come! I’ll explain afterwards. Come! One who has been more unfortunate than either you or I has doomed them all. Do you see that white, clear light, like an electric lamp, shining from the azotea? It’s the light of death! A lamp charged with dynamite, in a mined dining-room, will burst and not a rat will escape alive. Come!”

“No,” answered Isagani, shaking his head sadly. “I want to stay here, I want to see her for the last time. Tomorrow, you see, she will be something different.”

“Let fate have its way!” Basilio then exclaimed, hurrying away.

Isagani watched his friend rush away with a precipitation that indicated real terror, but continued to stare toward the charmed window, like the cavalier of Toggenburg waiting for his sweetheart to appear, as Schiller tells. Now the sala was deserted, all having repaired to the dining-rooms, [332]and it occurred to Isagani that Basilio’s fears may have been well-founded. He recalled the terrified countenance of him who was always so calm and composed, and it set him to thinking.

Suddenly an idea appeared clear in his imagination—the house was going to blow up and Paulita was there, Paulita was going to die a frightful death. In the presence of this idea everything was forgotten: jealousy, suffering, mental torture, and the generous youth thought only of his love. Without reflecting, without hesitation, he ran toward the house, and thanks to his stylish clothes and determined mien, easily secured admittance.

While these short scenes were occurring in the street, in the dining-kiosk of the greater gods there was passed from hand to hand a piece of parchment on which were written in red ink these fateful words:

Mene, Tekel, Phares[2]
Juan Crisostomo Ibarra

"Juan Crisostomo Ibarra? Who is he?" asked his Excellency, handing the paper to his neighbor.

"A joke in very bad taste!" exclaimed Don Custodio. "To sign the name of a filibuster dead more than ten years!"

"A filibuster!"

"It's a seditious joke!"

"There being ladies present—"

Padre Irene looked around for the joker and saw Padre Salvi, who was seated at the right of the Countess, turn as white as his napkin, while he stared at the mysterious words with bulging eyes. The scene of the sphinx recurred to him.

"What's the matter, Padre Salvi?" he asked. "Do you recognize your friend's signature?"

Padre Salvi did not reply. He made an effort to speak [333]and without being conscious of what he was doing wiped his forehead with his napkin.

“What has happened to your Reverence?”

“It is his very handwriting!” was the whispered reply in a scarcely perceptible voice. “It’s the very handwriting of Ibarra.” Leaning against the back of his chair, he let his arms fall as though all strength had deserted him.

Uneasiness became converted into fright, they all stared at one another without uttering a single word. His Excellency started to rise, but apprehending that such a move would be ascribed to fear, controlled himself and looked about him. There were no soldiers present, even the waiters were unknown to him.

“Let’s go on eating, gentlemen,” he exclaimed, “and pay no attention to the joke.” But his voice, instead of reassuring, increased the general uneasiness, for it trembled.

“I don’t suppose that that *Mene, Tekel, Phares*, means that we’re to be assassinated tonight?” speculated Don Custodio.

All remained motionless, but when he added, “Yet they might poison us,” they leaped up from their chairs.

The light, meanwhile, had begun slowly to fade. “The lamp is going out,” observed the General uneasily. “Will you turn up the wick, Padre Irene?”

But at that instant, with the swiftness of a flash of lightning, a figure rushed in, overturning a chair and knocking a servant down, and in the midst of the general surprise seized the lamp, rushed to the azotea, and threw it into the river. The whole thing happened in a second and the dining-kiosk was left in darkness.

The lamp had already struck the water before the servants could cry out, “Thief, thief!” and rush toward the azotea. “A revolver!” cried one of them. “A revolver, quick! After the thief!”

But the figure, more agile than they, had already mounted the balustrade and before a light could be brought, precipitated itself into the river, striking the water with a loud splash.[334]

[1] Spanish etiquette requires a host to welcome his guest with the conventional phrase: “The house belongs to you.”—Tr.

[2] The handwriting on the wall at Belshazzar’s feast, foretelling the destruction of Babylon. Daniel, v, 25–28.—Tr.

Ben-Zayb's Afflictions

Immediately upon hearing of the incident, after lights had been brought and the scarcely dignified attitudes of the startled gods revealed, Ben-Zayb, filled with holy indignation, and with the approval of the press-censor secured beforehand, hastened home—an entresol where he lived in a mess with others—to write an article that would be the sublimest ever penned under the skies of the Philippines. The Captain-General would leave disconsolate if he did not first enjoy his dithyrambs, and this Ben-Zayb, in his kindness of heart, could not allow. Hence he sacrificed the dinner and ball, nor did he sleep that night.

Sonorous exclamations of horror, of indignation, to fancy that the world was smashing to pieces and the stars, the eternal stars, were clashing together! Then a mysterious introduction, filled with allusions, veiled hints, then an account of the affair, and the final peroration. He multiplied the flourishes and exhausted all his euphemisms in describing the drooping shoulders and the tardy baptism of salad his Excellency had received on his Olympian brow, he eulogized the agility with which the General had recovered a vertical position, placing his head where

his legs had been, and vice versa, then intoned a hymn to Providence for having so solicitously guarded those sacred bones. The paragraph turned out to be so perfect that his Excellency appeared as a hero, and fell higher, as Victor Hugo said.

He wrote, erased, added, and polished, so that, without wanting in veracity—this was his special merit as a [335]journalist—the whole would be an epic, grand for the seven gods, cowardly and base for the unknown thief, "who had executed himself, terror-stricken, and in the very act convinced of the enormity of his crime."

He explained Padre Irene's act of plunging under the table as "an impulse of innate valor, which the habit of a God of peace and gentleness, worn throughout a whole life, had been unable to extinguish," for Padre Irene had tried to hurl himself upon the thief and had taken a straight course along the submensal route. In passing, he spoke of submarine passages, mentioned a project of Don Custodio's, called attention to the liberal education and wide travels of the priest. Padre Salvi's swoon was the excessive sorrow that took possession of the virtuous Franciscan to see the little fruit borne among the Indians by his pious sermons, while the immobility and fright of the other guests,

among them the Countess, who “sustained” Padre Salvi (she grabbed him), were the serenity and sang-froid of heroes, inured to danger in the performance of their duties, beside whom the Roman senators surprised by the Gallic invaders were nervous schoolgirls frightened at painted cockroaches.

Afterwards, to form a contrast, the picture of the thief: fear, madness, confusion, the fierce look, the distorted features, and—force of moral superiority in the race—his religious awe to see assembled there such august personages! Here came in opportunely a long imprecation, a harangue, a diatribe against the perversion of good customs, hence the necessity of a permanent military tribunal, “a declaration of martial law within the limits already so declared, special legislation, energetic and repressive, because it is in every way needful, it is of imperative importance to impress upon the malefactors and criminals that if the heart is generous and paternal for those who are submissive and obedient to the law, the hand is strong, firm, inexorable, hard, and severe for those who against all reason fail to respect it and who insult the sacred institutions of the [336]fatherland. Yes, gentlemen, this is demanded not only for the welfare of these islands, not only for the welfare of all

mankind, but also in the name of Spain, the honor of the Spanish name, the prestige of the Iberian people, because before all things else Spaniards we are, and the flag of Spain," etc.

He terminated the article with this farewell: "Go in peace, gallant warrior, you who with expert hand have guided the destinies of this country in such calamitous times! Go in peace to breathe the balmy breezes of Manzanares![1] We shall remain here like faithful sentinels to venerate your memory, to admire your wise dispositions, to avenge the infamous attempt upon your splendid gift, which we will recover even if we have to dry up the seas! Such a precious relic will be for this country an eternal monument to your splendor, your presence of mind, your gallantry!"

In this rather confused way he concluded the article and before dawn sent it to the printing-office, of course with the censor's permit. Then he went to sleep like Napoleon, after he had arranged the plan for the battle of Jena.

But at dawn he was awakened to have the sheets of copy returned with a note from the editor saying that his Excellency had positively and severely forbidden

any mention of the affair, and had further ordered the denial of any versions and comments that might get abroad, discrediting them as exaggerated rumors.

To Ben-Zayb this blow was the murder of a beautiful and sturdy child, born and nurtured with such great pain and fatigue. Where now hurl the Catilinarian pride, the splendid exhibition of warlike crime-avenging materials? And to think that within a month or two he was going to leave the Philippines, and the article could not be published in Spain, since how could he say those things about the criminals of Madrid, where other ideas prevailed, where [337]extenuating circumstances were sought, where facts were weighed, where there were juries, and so on? Articles such as his were like certain poisonous rums that are manufactured in Europe, good enough to be sold among the negroes, *good for negroes*,[2] with the difference that if the negroes did not drink them they would not be destroyed, while Ben-Zayb's articles, whether the Filipinos read them or not, had their effect.

"If only some other crime might be committed today or tomorrow," he mused.

With the thought of that child dead before seeing the light, those frozen buds, and feeling his eyes fill with tears, he dressed himself to call upon the editor. But the editor shrugged his shoulders; his Excellency had forbidden it because if it should be divulged that seven of the greater gods had let themselves be surprised and robbed by a nobody, while they brandished knives and forks, that would endanger the integrity of the fatherland! So he had ordered that no search be made for the lamp or the thief, and had recommended to his successors that they should not run the risk of dining in any private house, without being surrounded by halberdiers and guards. As those who knew anything about the events that night in Don Timoteo's house were for the most part military officials and government employees, it was not difficult to suppress the affair in public, for it concerned the integrity of the fatherland. Before this name Ben-Zayb bowed his head heroically, thinking about Abraham, Guzman El Bueno,[3] or at least, Brutus and other heroes of antiquity.

Such a sacrifice could not remain unrewarded, the gods of journalism being pleased with Abraham Ben-Zayb. Almost upon the hour came the reporting angel bearing the sacrificial lamb in the shape of an assault

committed at a country-house on the Pasig, where certain friars were [338]spending the heated season. Here was his opportunity and Ben-Zayb praised his gods.

“The robbers got over two thousand pesos, leaving badly wounded one friar and two servants. The curate defended himself as well as he could behind a chair, which was smashed in his hands.”

“Wait, wait!” said Ben-Zayb, taking notes. “Forty or fifty outlaws traitorously—revolvers, bolos, shotguns, pistols—lion at bay—chair—splinters flying—barbarously wounded—ten thousand pesos!”

So great was his enthusiasm that he was not content with mere reports, but proceeded in person to the scene of the crime, composing on the road a Homeric description of the fight. A harangue in the mouth of the leader? A scornful defiance on the part of the priest? All the metaphors and similes applied to his Excellency, Padre Irene, and Padre Salvi would exactly fit the wounded friar and the description of the thief would serve for each of the outlaws. The imprecation could be expanded, since he could talk of religion, of the faith, of charity, of the ringing of bells, of what the Indians owed to the friars, he could

get sentimental and melt into Castelarian[4] epigrams and lyric periods. The señoritas of the city would read the article and murmur, “Ben-Zayb, bold as a lion and tender as a lamb!”

But when he reached the scene, to his great astonishment he learned that the wounded friar was no other than Padre Camorra, sentenced by his Provincial to expiate in the pleasant country-house on the banks of the Pasig his pranks in Tiani. He had a slight scratch on his hand and a bruise on his head received from flattening himself out on the floor. The robbers numbered three or four, armed only with bolos, the sum stolen fifty pesos!

“It won’t do!” exclaimed Ben-Zayb. “Shut up! You don’t know what you’re talking about.”

“How don’t I know, *puñales?*”[339]

“Don’t be a fool—the robbers must have numbered more.”

“You ink-slinger—”

So they had quite an altercation. What chiefly concerned Ben-Zayb was not to throw away the article, to give importance to the affair, so that he could use the peroration.

But a fearful rumor cut short their dispute. The robbers caught had made some important revelations. One of the outlaws under*Matanglawin* (Cabesang Tales) had made an appointment with them to join his band in Santa Mesa, thence to sack the conventos and houses of the wealthy. They would be guided by a Spaniard, tall and sunburnt, with white hair, who said that he was acting under the orders of the General, whose great friend he was, and they had been further assured that the artillery and various regiments would join them, wherefore they were to entertain no fear at all. The tulisanes would be pardoned and have a third part of the booty assigned to them. The signal was to have been a cannon-shot, but having waited for it in vain the tulisanes, thinking themselves deceived, separated, some going back to their homes, some returning to the mountains vowing vengeance on the Spaniard, who had thus failed twice to keep his word. Then they, the robbers caught, had decided to do something on their own account, attacking the country-house that they found closest at hand, resolving religiously to give two-thirds of the booty to the Spaniard with white hair, if perchance he should call upon them for it.

The description being recognized as that of Simoun, the declaration was received as an absurdity and the robber subjected to all kinds of tortures, including the electric machine, for his impious blasphemy. But news of the disappearance of the jeweler having attracted the attention of the whole Escolta, and the sacks of powder and great quantities of cartridges having been discovered in his house, the story began to wear an appearance of truth. Mystery began to enwrap the affair, enveloping it in clouds; there [340]were whispered conversations, coughs, suspicious looks, suggestive comments, and trite second-hand remarks. Those who were on the inside were unable to get over their astonishment, they put on long faces, turned pale, and but little was wanting for many persons to lose their minds in realizing certain things that had before passed unnoticed.

“We’ve had a narrow escape! Who would have said __”

In the afternoon Ben-Zayb, his pockets filled with revolvers and cartridges, went to see Don Custodio, whom he found hard at work over a project against American jewelers. In a hushed voice he whispered between the palms of his hands into the journalist’s ear mysterious words.

“Really?” questioned Ben-Zayb, slapping his hand on his pocket and paling visibly.

“Wherever he may be found—” The sentence was completed with an expressive pantomime. Don Custodio raised both arms to the height of his face, with the right more bent than the left, turned the palms of his hands toward the floor, closed one eye, and made two movements in advance. “Ssh! Ssh!” he hissed.

“And the diamonds?” inquired Ben-Zayb.

“If they find him—” He went through another pantomime with the fingers of his right hand, spreading them out and clenching them together like the closing of a fan, clutching out with them somewhat in the manner of the wings of a wind-mill sweeping imaginary objects toward itself with practised skill. Ben-Zayb responded with another pantomime, opening his eyes wide, arching his eyebrows and sucking in his breath eagerly as though nutritious air had just been discovered.

“Sssh!”[341]

[1] A town in Ciudad Real province, Spain.—Tr.

[2] The italicized words are in English in the original.—Tr.

[3] A Spanish hero, whose chief exploit was the capture of Gibraltar from the Moors in 1308.—Tr.

[4] Emilio Castelar (1832–1899), generally regarded as the greatest of Spanish orators.—Tr.

The Mystery

Todo se sabe

Notwithstanding so many precautions, rumors reached the public, even though quite changed and mutilated. On the following night they were the theme of comment in the house of Orenda, a rich jewel merchant in the industrious district of Santa Cruz, and the numerous friends of the family gave attention to nothing else. They were not indulging in cards, or playing the piano, while little Tinay, the youngest of the girls, became bored playing *chongka* by herself, without being able to understand the interest awakened by assaults, conspiracies, and sacks of powder, when there were in the seven holes so many beautiful cowries that seemed to be winking at her in unison and smiled with their tiny mouths half-opened, begging to be carried up to the *home*. Even Isagani, who, when he came, always used to play with her and allow himself to be beautifully cheated, did not come at her call, for Isagani was gloomily and silently listening to something Chichoy the silversmith was relating. Momoy, the betrothed of Sensia, the eldest of the daughters—a pretty and vivacious girl, rather given to joking—had left the window where he was

accustomed to spend his evenings in amorous discourse, and this action seemed to be very annoying to the lory whose cage hung from the eaves there, the lory endeared to the house from its ability to greet everybody in the morning with marvelous phrases of love. Capitana Loleng, the energetic and intelligent Capitana Loleng, had her account-book open before her, but she [342]neither read nor wrote in it, nor was her attention fixed on the trays of loose pearls, nor on the diamonds—she had completely forgotten herself and was all ears. Her husband himself, the great Capitan Toringoy,—a transformation of the name Domingo,—the happiest man in the district, without other occupation than to dress well, eat, loaf, and gossip, while his whole family worked and toiled, had not gone to join his coterie, but was listening between fear and emotion to the hair-raising news of the lank Chichoy.

Nor was reason for all this lacking. Chichoy had gone to deliver some work for Don Timoteo Pelaez, a pair of earrings for the bride, at the very time when they were tearing down the kiosk that on the previous night had served as a dining-room for the foremost officials. Here Chichoy turned pale and his hair stood on end.

“*Nakú*!” he exclaimed, “sacks and sacks of powder, sacks of powder under the floor, in the roof, under the table, under the chairs, everywhere! It’s lucky none of the workmen were smoking.”

“Who put those sacks of powder there?” asked Capitana Loleng, who was brave and did not turn pale, as did the enamored Momoy. But Momoy had attended the wedding, so his posthumous emotion can be appreciated: he had been near the kiosk.

“That’s what no one can explain,” replied Chichoy. “Who would have any interest in breaking up the fiesta? There couldn’t have been more than one, as the celebrated lawyer Señor Pasta who was there on a visit declared—either an enemy of Don Timoteo’s or a rival of Juanito’s.”

The Orenda girls turned instinctively toward Isagani, who smiled silently.

“Hide yourself,” Capitana Loleng advised him. “They may accuse you. Hide!”

Again Isagani smiled but said nothing.

“Don Timoteo,” continued Chichoy, “did not know to [343]whom to attribute the deed. He himself superintended the work, he and his friend Simoun,

and nobody else. The house was thrown into an uproar, the lieutenant of the guard came, and after enjoining secrecy upon everybody, they sent me away. But—”

“But—but—” stammered the trembling Momoy.

“*Nakú!*” ejaculated Sensia, gazing at her fiancé and trembling sympathetically to remember that he had been at the fiesta. “This young man—If the house had blown up—” She stared at her sweetheart passionately and admired his courage.

“If it had blown up—”

“No one in the whole of Calle Anloague would have been left alive,” concluded Capitan Toringoy, feigning valor and indifference in the presence of his family.

“I left in consternation,” resumed Chichoy, “thinking about how, if a mere spark, a cigarette had fallen, if a lamp had been overturned, at the present moment we should have neither a General, nor an Archbishop, nor any one, not even a government clerk! All who were at the fiesta last night—annihilated!”

“*Vírgen Santísima!* This young man—”

"*'Susmariosep!*" exclaimed Capitana Loleng. "All our debtors were there, *'Susmariosep!* And we have a house near there! Who could it have been?"

"Now you may know about it," added Chichoy in a whisper, "but you must keep it a secret. This afternoon I met a friend, a clerk in an office, and in talking about the affair, he gave me the clue to the mystery—he had it from some government employees. Who do you suppose put the sacks of powder there?"

Many shrugged their shoulders, while Capitan Toringoy merely looked askance at Isagani.

"The friars?"

"Quiroga the Chinaman?"

"Some student?"

"Makaraig?"[344]

Capitan Toringoy coughed and glanced at Isagani, while Chichoy shook his head and smiled.

"The jeweler Simoun."

"Simoun!!"

The profound silence of amazement followed these words. Simoun, the evil genius of the Captain-

General, the rich trader to whose house they had gone to buy unset gems, Simoun, who had received the Orenda girls with great courtesy and had paid them fine compliments! For the very reason that the story seemed absurd it was believed. "*Credo quia absurdum,*" said St. Augustine.

"But wasn't Simoun at the fiesta last night?" asked Sensia.

"Yes," said Momoy. "But now I remember! He left the house just as we were sitting down to the dinner. He went to get his wedding-gift."

"But wasn't he a friend of the General's? Wasn't he a partner of Don Timoteo's?"

"Yes, he made himself a partner in order to strike the blow and kill all the Spaniards."

"Aha!" cried Sensia. "Now I understand!"

"What?"

"You didn't want to believe Aunt Tentay. Simoun is the devil and he has bought up the souls of all the Spaniards. Aunt Tentay said so!"

Capitana Loleng crossed herself and looked uneasily toward the jewels, fearing to see them turn into live

coals, while Capitan Toringoy took off the ring which had come from Simoun.

“Simoun has disappeared without leaving any traces,” added Chichoy. “The Civil Guard is searching for him.”

“Yes,” observed Sensia, crossing herself, “searching for the devil.”

Now many things were explained: Simoun’s fabulous wealth and the peculiar smell in his house, the smell of sulphur. Binday, another of the daughters, a frank and lovely girl, remembered having seen blue flames in the [345]jeweler’s house one afternoon when she and her mother had gone there to buy jewels. Isagani listened attentively, but said nothing.

“So, last night—” ventured Momoy.

“Last night?” echoed Sensia, between curiosity and fear.

Momoy hesitated, but the face Sensia put on banished his fear. “Last night, while we were eating, there was a disturbance, the light in the General’s dining-room went out. They say that some unknown person stole the lamp that was presented by Simoun.”

“A thief? One of the Black Hand?”

Isagani arose to walk back and forth.

“Didn’t they catch him?”

“He jumped into the river before anybody recognized him. Some say he was a Spaniard, some a Chinaman, and others an Indian.”

“It’s believed that with the lamp,” added Chichoy, “he was going to set fire to the house, then the powder—”

Momoy again shuddered but noticing that Sensia was watching him tried to control himself. “What a pity!” he exclaimed with an effort. “How wickedly the thief acted. Everybody would have been killed.”

Sensia stared at him in fright, the women crossed themselves, while Capitan Toringoy, who was afraid of politics, made a move to go away.

Momoy turned to Isagani, who observed with an enigmatic smile: “It’s always wicked to take what doesn’t belong to you. If that thief had known what it was all about and had been able to reflect, surely he wouldn’t have done as he did.”

Then, after a pause, he added, “For nothing in the world would I want to be in his place!”

So they continued their comments and conjectures until an hour later, when Isagani bade the family farewell, to return forever to his uncle’s side.[346]

Fatality

Matanglawin was the terror of Luzon. His band had as lief appear in one province where it was least expected as make a descent upon another that was preparing to resist it. It burned a sugar-mill in Batangas and destroyed the crops, on the following day it murdered the Justice of the Peace of Tiani, and on the next took possession of the town of Cavite, carrying off the arms from the town hall. The central provinces, from Tayabas to Pangasinan, suffered from his depredations, and his bloody name extended from Albay in the south to Kagayan in the north. The towns, disarmed through mistrust on the part of a weak government, fell easy prey into his hands—at his approach the fields were abandoned by the farmers, the herds were scattered, while a trail of blood and fire marked his passage. *Matanglawin* laughed at the severe measures ordered by the government against the tulisanes, since from them only the people in the outlying villages suffered, being captured and maltreated if they resisted the band, and if they made peace with it being flogged and deported by the government, provided they completed the journey and did not meet with a fatal accident on the way.

Thanks to these terrible alternatives many of the country folk decided to enlist under his command.

As a result of this reign of terror, trade among the towns, already languishing, died out completely. The rich dared not travel, and the poor feared to be arrested by the Civil Guard, which, being under obligation to pursue the tulisanes, often seized the first person encountered and subjected him to unspeakable tortures. In its impotence, the [347]government put on a show of energy toward the persons whom it suspected, in order that by force of cruelty the people should not realize its weakness —the fear that prompted such measures.

A string of these hapless suspects, some six or seven, with their arms tied behind them, bound together like a bunch of human meat, was one afternoon marching through the excessive heat along a road that skirted a mountain, escorted by ten or twelve guards armed with rifles. Their bayonets gleamed in the sun, the barrels of their rifles became hot, and even the sage-leaves in their helmets scarcely served to temper the effect of the deadly May sun.

Deprived of the use of their arms and pressed close against one another to save rope, the prisoners moved

along almost uncovered and unshod, he being the best off who had a handkerchief twisted around his head. Panting, suffering, covered with dust which perspiration converted into mud, they felt their brains melting, they saw lights dancing before them, red spots floating in the air. Exhaustion and dejection were pictured in their faces, desperation, wrath, something indescribable, the look of one who dies cursing, of a man who is weary of life, who hates himself, who blasphemes against God. The strongest lowered their heads to rub their faces against the dusky backs of those in front of them and thus wipe away the sweat that was blinding them. Many were limping, but if any one of them happened to fall and thus delay the march he would hear a curse as a soldier ran up brandishing a branch torn from a tree and forced him to rise by striking about in all directions. The string then started to run, dragging, rolling in the dust, the fallen one, who howled and begged to be killed; but perchance he succeeded in getting on his feet and then went along crying like a child and cursing the hour he was born.

The human cluster halted at times while the guards drank, and then the prisoners continued on their way with [348]parched mouths, darkened brains, and hearts

full of curses. Thirst was for these wretches the least of their troubles.

“Move on, you sons of ——!” cried a soldier, again refreshed, hurling the insult common among the lower classes of Filipinos.

The branch whistled and fell on any shoulder whatsoever, the nearest one, or at times upon a face to leave a welt at first white, then red, and later dirty with the dust of the road.

“Move on, you cowards!” at times a voice yelled in Spanish, deepening its tone.

“Cowards!” repeated the mountain echoes.

Then the cowards quickened their pace under a sky of red-hot iron, over a burning road, lashed by the knotty branch which was worn into shreds on their livid skins. A Siberian winter would perhaps be tenderer than the May sun of the Philippines.

Yet, among the soldiers there was one who looked with disapproving eyes upon so much wanton cruelty, as he marched along silently with his brows knit in disgust. At length, seeing that the guard, not satisfied with the branch, was kicking the prisoners that fell,

he could no longer restrain himself but cried out impatiently, “Here, Mautang, let them alone!”

Mautang turned toward him in surprise. “What’s it to you, Carolino?” he asked.

“To me, nothing, but it hurts me,” replied Carolino. “They’re men like ourselves.”

“It’s plain that you’re new to the business!” retorted Mautang with a compassionate smile. “How did you treat the prisoners in the war?”

“With more consideration, surely!” answered Carolino.

Mautang remained silent for a moment and then, apparently having discovered the reason, calmly rejoined, “Ah, it’s because they are enemies and fight us, while these—these are our own countrymen.”

Then drawing nearer to Carolino he whispered, “How [349]stupid you are! They’re treated so in order that they may attempt to resist or to escape, and then —bang!”

Carolino made no reply.

One of the prisoners then begged that they let him stop for a moment.

“This is a dangerous place,” answered the corporal, gazing uneasily toward the mountain. “Move on!”

“Move on!” echoed Mautang and his lash whistled.

The prisoner twisted himself around to stare at him with reproachful eyes. “You are more cruel than the Spaniard himself,” he said.

Mautang replied with more blows, when suddenly a bullet whistled, followed by a loud report. Mautang dropped his rifle, uttered an oath, and clutching at his breast with both hands fell spinning into a heap. The prisoner saw him writhing in the dust with blood spurting from his mouth.

“Halt!” called the corporal, suddenly turning pale.

The soldiers stopped and stared about them. A wisp of smoke rose from a thicket on the height above. Another bullet sang to its accompanying report and the corporal, wounded in the thigh, doubled over vomiting curses. The column was attacked by men hidden among the rocks above.

Sullen with rage the corporal motioned toward the string of prisoners and laconically ordered, “Fire!”

The wretches fell upon their knees, filled with consternation. As they could not lift their hands, they

begged for mercy by kissing the dust or bowing their heads—one talked of his children, another of his mother who would be left unprotected, one promised money, another called upon God—but the muzzles were quickly lowered and a hideous volley silenced them all.

Then began the sharpshooting against those who were behind the rocks above, over which a light cloud of smoke began to hover. To judge from the scarcity of their shots, the invisible enemies could not have more than three rifles. As they advanced firing, the guards sought cover behind [350]tree-trunks or crouched down as they attempted to scale the height. Splintered rocks leaped up, broken twigs fell from trees, patches of earth were torn up, and the first guard who attempted the ascent rolled back with a bullet through his shoulder.

The hidden enemy had the advantage of position, but the valiant guards, who did not know how to flee, were on the point of retiring, for they had paused, unwilling to advance; that fight against the invisible unnerved them. Smoke and rocks alone could be seen —not a voice was heard, not a shadow appeared; they seemed to be fighting with the mountain.

“Shoot, Carolino! What are you aiming at?” called the corporal.

At that instant a man appeared upon a rock, making signs with his rifle.

“Shoot him!” ordered the corporal with a foul oath.

Three guards obeyed the order, but the man continued standing there, calling out at the top of his voice something unintelligible.

Carolino paused, thinking that he recognized something familiar about that figure, which stood out plainly in the sunlight. But the corporal threatened to tie him up if he did not fire, so Carolino took aim and the report of his rifle was heard. The man on the rock spun around and disappeared with a cry that left Carolino horror-stricken.

Then followed a rustling in the bushes, indicating that those within were scattering in all directions, so the soldiers boldly advanced, now that there was no more resistance. Another man appeared upon the rock, waving a spear, and they fired at him. He sank down slowly, catching at the branch of a tree, but with another volley fell face downwards on the rock.

The guards climbed on nimbly, with bayonets fixed ready for a hand-to-hand fight. Carolino alone moved forward reluctantly, with a wandering, gloomy look, the cry of the man struck by his bullet still ringing in his ears. The [351]first to reach the spot found an old man dying, stretched out on the rock. He plunged his bayonet into the body, but the old man did not even wink, his eyes being fixed on Carolino with an indescribable gaze, while with his bony hand he pointed to something behind the rock.

The soldiers turned to see Caroline frightfully pale, his mouth hanging open, with a look in which glimmered the last spark of reason, for Carolino, who was no other than Tano, Cabesang Tales' son, and who had just returned from the Carolines, recognized in the dying man his grandfather, Tandang Selo. No longer able to speak, the old man's dying eyes uttered a whole poem of grief—and then a corpse, he still continued to point to something behind the rock.[352]

Conclusion

In his solitary retreat on the shore of the sea, whose mobile surface was visible through the open, windows, extending outward until it mingled with the horizon, Padre Florentino was relieving the monotony by playing on his harmonium sad and melancholy tunes, to which the sonorous roar of the surf and the sighing of the treetops of the neighboring wood served as accompaniments. Notes long, full, mournful as a prayer, yet still vigorous, escaped from the old instrument. Padre Florentino, who was an accomplished musician, was improvising, and, as he was alone, gave free rein to the sadness in his heart.

For the truth was that the old man was very sad. His good friend, Don Tiburcio de Espadaña, had just left him, fleeing from the persecution of his wife. That morning he had received a note from the lieutenant of the Civil Guard, which ran thus:

MY DEAR CHAPLAIN,—I have just received from the commandant a telegram that says, “Spaniard hidden house Padre Florentino capture forward alive dead.” As the telegram is quite explicit, warn your friend not to be there when I come to arrest him at eight tonight.

Affectionately,

PEREZ

Burn this note.

“T-that V-victorina!” Don Tiburcio had stammered. “S-she’s c-capable of having me s-shot!”

Padre Florentino was unable to reassure him. Vainly he pointed out to him that the word *cojera* should have read *cogerá*,[1] and that the hidden Spaniard could not be Don [353]Tiburcio, but the jeweler Simoun, who two days before had arrived, wounded and a fugitive, begging for shelter. But Don Tiburcio would not be convinced—*cojera* was his own lameness, his personal description, and it was an intrigue of Victorina's to get him back alive or dead, as Isagani had written from Manila. So the poor Ulysses had left the priest's house to conceal himself in the hut of a woodcutter.

No doubt was entertained by Padre Florentino that the Spaniard wanted was the jeweler Simoun, who had arrived mysteriously, himself carrying the jewel-chest, bleeding, morose, and exhausted. With the free and cordial Filipino hospitality, the priest had taken him in, without asking indiscreet questions, and as news of the events in Manila had not yet reached his ears he was unable to understand the situation clearly. The only conjecture that occurred to him was that the General, the jeweler's friend and protector, being gone, probably his enemies, the victims of wrong and abuse, were now rising and calling for vengeance, and that the acting Governor was pursuing him to

make him disgorge the wealth he had accumulated—hence his flight. But whence came his wounds? Had he tried to commit suicide? Were they the result of personal revenge? Or were they merely caused by an accident, as Simoun claimed? Had they been received in escaping from the force that was pursuing him?

This last conjecture was the one that seemed to have the greatest appearance of probability, being further strengthened by the telegram received and Simoun's decided unwillingness from the start to be treated by the doctor from the capital. The jeweler submitted only to the ministrations of Don Tiburcio, and even to them with marked distrust. In this situation Padre Florentino was asking himself what[354]line of conduct he should pursue when the Civil Guard came to arrest Simoun. His condition would not permit his removal, much less a long journey—but the telegram said alive or dead.

Padre Florentine ceased playing and approached the window to gaze out at the sea, whose desolate surface was without a ship, without a sail—it gave him no suggestion. A solitary islet outlined in the distance spoke only of solitude and made the space more lonely. Infinity is at times despairingly mute.

The old man was trying to analyze the sad and ironical smile with which Simoun had received the news that he was to be arrested. What did that smile mean? And that other smile, still sadder and more ironical, with which he received the news that they would not come before eight at night? What did all this mystery signify? Why did Simoun refuse to hide? There came into his mind the celebrated saying of St. John Chrysostom when he was defending the eunuch Eutropius: “Never was a better time than this to say—Vanity of vanities and all is vanity!”

Yes, that Simoun, so rich, so powerful, so feared a week ago, and now more unfortunate than Eutropius, was seeking refuge, not at the altars of a church, but in the miserable house of a poor native priest, hidden in the forest, on the solitary seashore! Vanity of vanities and all is vanity! That man would within a few hours be a prisoner, dragged from the bed where he lay, without respect for his condition, without consideration for his wounds—dead or alive his enemies demanded him! How could he save him? Where could he find the moving accents of the bishop of Constantinople? What weight would his weak words have, the words of a native priest, whose

own humiliation this same Simoun had in his better days seemed to applaud and encourage?

But Padre Florentine no longer recalled the indifferent reception that two months before the jeweler had accorded to him when he had tried to interest him in favor of Isagani, [355]then a prisoner on account of his imprudent chivalry; he forgot the activity Simoun had displayed in urging Paulita's marriage, which had plunged Isagani into the fearful misanthropy that was worrying his uncle. He forgot all these things and thought only of the sick man's plight and his own obligations as a host, until his senses reeled. Where must he hide him to avoid his falling into the clutches of the authorities? But the person chiefly concerned was not worrying, he was smiling.

While he was pondering over these things, the old man was approached by a servant who said that the sick man wished to speak with him, so he went into the next room, a clean and well-ventilated apartment with a floor of wide boards smoothed and polished, and simply furnished with big, heavy armchairs of ancient design, without varnish or paint. At one end there was a large kamagon bed with its four posts to support the canopy, and beside it a table covered with

bottles, lint, and bandages. A praying-desk at the feet of a Christ and a scanty library led to the suspicion that it was the priest's own bedroom, given up to his guest according to the Filipino custom of offering to the stranger the best table, the best room, and the best bed in the house. Upon seeing the windows opened wide to admit freely the healthful sea-breeze and the echoes of its eternal lament, no one in the Philippines would have said that a sick person was to be found there, since it is the custom to close all the windows and stop up all the cracks just as soon as any one catches a cold or gets an insignificant headache.

Padre Florentine looked toward the bed and was astonished to see that the sick man's face had lost its tranquil and ironical expression. Hidden grief seemed to knit his brows, anxiety was depicted in his looks, his lips were curled in a smile of pain.

"Are you suffering, Señor Simoun?" asked the priest solicitously, going to his side.

"Some! But in a little while I shall cease to suffer," he replied with a shake of his head.[356]

Padre Florentine clasped his hands in fright, suspecting that he understood the terrible truth. "My

God, what have you done? What have you taken?" He reached toward the bottles.

"It's useless now! There's no remedy at all!" answered Simoun with a pained smile. "What did you expect me to do? Before the clock strikes eight—alive or dead—dead, yes, but alive, no!"

"My God, what have you done?"

"Be calm!" urged the sick man with a wave of his hand. "What's done is done. I must not fall into anybody's hands—my secret would be torn from me. Don't get excited, don't lose your head, it's useless! Listen—the night is coming on and there's no time to be lost. I must tell you my secret, and intrust to you my last request, I must lay my life open before you. At the supreme moment I want to lighten myself of a load, I want to clear up a doubt of mine. You who believe so firmly in God—I want you to tell me if there is a God!"

"But an antidote, Señor Simoun! I have ether, chloroform—"

The priest began to search for a flask, until Simoun cried impatiently, "Useless, it's useless! Don't waste time! I'll go away with my secret!"

The bewildered priest fell down at his desk and prayed at the feet of the Christ, hiding his face in his hands. Then he arose serious and grave, as if he had received from his God all the force, all the dignity, all the authority of the Judge of consciences. Moving a chair to the head of the bed he prepared to listen.

At the first words Simoun murmured, when he told his real name, the old priest started back and gazed at him in terror, whereat the sick man smiled bitterly. Taken by surprise, the priest was not master of himself, but he soon recovered, and covering his face with a handkerchief again bent over to listen.

Simoun related his sorrowful story: how, thirteen years [357]before, he had returned from Europe filled with hopes and smiling illusions, having come back to marry a girl whom he loved, disposed to do good and forgive all who had wronged him, just so they would let him live in peace. But it was not so. A mysterious hand involved him in the confusion of an uprising planned by his enemies. Name, fortune, love, future, liberty, all were lost, and he escaped only through the heroism of a friend. Then he swore vengeance. With the wealth of his family, which had been buried in a wood, he had fled, had gone to foreign lands and engaged in trade. He took part in

the war in Cuba, aiding first one side and then another, but always profiting. There he made the acquaintance of the General, then a major, whose good-will he won first by loans of money, and afterwards he made a friend of him by the knowledge of criminal secrets. With his money he had been able to secure the General's appointment and, once in the Philippines, he had used him as a blind tool and incited him to all kinds of injustice, availing himself of his insatiable lust for gold.

The confession was long and tedious, but during the whole of it the confessor made no further sign of surprise and rarely interrupted the sick man. It was night when Padre Florentino, wiping the perspiration from his face, arose and began to meditate. Mysterious darkness flooded the room, so that the moonbeams entering through the window filled it with vague lights and vaporous reflections.

Into the midst of the silence the priest's voice broke sad and deliberate, but consoling: "God will forgive you, Señor—Simoun," he said. "He knows that we are fallible, He has seen that you have suffered, and in ordaining that the chastisement for your faults should come as death from the very ones you have instigated to crime, we can see His infinite mercy. He

has frustrated your plans one by one, the best conceived, first by the death of Maria Clara, then by a lack of preparation, then in some mysterious way. Let us bow to His will and render Him thanks!”[358]

“According to you, then,” feebly responded the sick man, “His will is that these islands—”

“Should continue in the condition in which they suffer?” finished the priest, seeing that the other hesitated. “I don’t know, sir, I can’t read the thought of the Inscrutable. I know that He has not abandoned those peoples who in their supreme moments have trusted in Him and made Him the Judge of their cause, I know that His arm has never failed when, justice long trampled upon and every recourse gone, the oppressed have taken up the sword to fight for home and wife and children, for their inalienable rights, which, as the German poet says, shine ever there above, unextinguished and inextinguishable, like the eternal stars themselves. No, God is justice, He cannot abandon His cause, the cause of liberty, without which no justice is possible.”

“Why then has He denied me His aid?” asked the sick man in a voice charged with bitter complaint.

“Because you chose means that He could not sanction,” was the severe reply. “The glory of saving a country is not for him who has contributed to its ruin. You have believed that what crime and iniquity have defiled and deformed, another crime and another iniquity can purify and redeem. Wrong! Hate never produces anything but monsters and crime criminals! Love alone realizes wonderful works, virtue alone can save! No, if our country has ever to be free, it will not be through vice and crime, it will not be so by corrupting its sons, deceiving some and bribing others, no! Redemption presupposes virtue, virtue sacrifice, and sacrifice love!”

“Well, I accept your explanation,” rejoined the sick man, after a pause. “I have been mistaken, but, because I have been mistaken, will that God deny liberty to a people and yet save many who are much worse criminals than I am? What is my mistake compared to the crimes of our rulers? Why has that God to give more heed to my iniquity than to the cries of so many innocents? Why has He not stricken me down and then made the people triumph? Why [359]does He let so many worthy and just ones suffer and look complacently upon their tortures?”

“The just and the worthy must suffer in order that their ideas may be known and extended! You must shake or shatter the vase to spread its perfume, you must smite the rock to get the spark! There is something providential in the persecutions of tyrants, Señor Simoun!”

“I knew it,” murmured the sick man, “and therefore I encouraged the tyranny.”

“Yes, my friend, but more corrupt influences than anything else were spread. You fostered the social rottenness without sowing an idea. From this fermentation of vices loathing alone could spring, and if anything were born overnight it would be at best a mushroom, for mushrooms only can spring spontaneously from filth. True it is that the vices of the government are fatal to it, they cause its death, but they kill also the society in whose bosom they are developed. An immoral government presupposes a demoralized people, a conscienceless administration, greedy and servile citizens in the settled parts, outlaws and brigands in the mountains. Like master, like slave! Like government, like country!”

A brief pause ensued, broken at length by the sick man’s voice. “Then, what can be done?”

“Suffer and work!”

“Suffer—work!” echoed the sick man bitterly. “Ah, it’s easy to say that, when you are not suffering, when the work is rewarded. If your God demands such great sacrifices from man, man who can scarcely count upon the present and doubts the future, if you had seen what I have, the miserable, the wretched, suffering unspeakable tortures for crimes they have not committed, murdered to cover up the faults and incapacity of others, poor fathers of families torn from their homes to work to no purpose upon highways that are destroyed each day and seem only to serve for sinking families into want. Ah, to suffer, to work, is the will of God! Convince them that their murder is their [360]salvation, that their work is the prosperity of the home! To suffer, to work! What God is that?”

“A very just God, Señor Simoun,” replied the priest. “A God who chastises our lack of faith, our vices, the little esteem in which we hold dignity and the civic virtues. We tolerate vice, we make ourselves its accomplices, at times we applaud it, and it is just, very just that we suffer the consequences, that our children suffer them. It is the God of liberty, Señor Simoun, who obliges us to love it, by making the

yoke heavy for us—a God of mercy, of equity, who while He chastises us, betters us and only grants prosperity to him who has merited it through his efforts. The school of suffering tempers, the arena of combat strengthens the soul.

“I do not mean to say that our liberty will be secured at the sword’s point, for the sword plays but little part in modern affairs, but that we must secure it by making ourselves worthy of it, by exalting the intelligence and the dignity of the individual, by loving justice, right, and greatness, even to the extent of dying for them,—and when a people reaches that height God will provide a weapon, the idols will be shattered, the tyranny will crumble like a house of cards and liberty will shine out like the first dawn.

“Our ills we owe to ourselves alone, so let us blame no one. If Spain should see that we were less complaisant with tyranny and more disposed to struggle and suffer for our rights, Spain would be the first to grant us liberty, because when the fruit of the womb reaches maturity woe unto the mother who would stifle it! So, while the Filipino people has not sufficient energy to proclaim, with head erect and bosom bared, its rights to social life, and to guarantee it with its sacrifices, with its own blood; while we see

our countrymen in private life ashamed within themselves, hear the voice of conscience roar in rebellion and protest, yet in public life keep silence or even echo the words of him who abuses them in order to mock the abused; while we see them wrap themselves up in their egotism and with a [361]forced smile praise the most iniquitous actions, begging with their eyes a portion of the booty—why grant them liberty? With Spain or without Spain they would always be the same, and perhaps worse! Why independence, if the slaves of today will be the tyrants of tomorrow? And that they will be such is not to be doubted, for he who submits to tyranny loves it.

“Señor Simoun, when our people is unprepared, when it enters the fight through fraud and force, without a clear understanding of what it is doing, the wisest attempts will fail, and better that they do fail, since why commit the wife to the husband if he does not sufficiently love her, if he is not ready to die for her?”

Padre Florentino felt the sick man catch and press his hand, so he became silent, hoping that the other might speak, but he merely felt a stronger pressure of the hand, heard a sigh, and then profound silence

reigned in the room. Only the sea, whose waves were rippled by the night breeze, as though awaking from the heat of the day, sent its hoarse roar, its eternal chant, as it rolled against the jagged rocks. The moon, now free from the sun's rivalry, peacefully commanded the sky, and the trees of the forest bent down toward one another, telling their ancient legends in mysterious murmurs borne on the wings of the wind.

The sick man said nothing, so Padre Florentino, deeply thoughtful, murmured: "Where are the youth who will consecrate their golden hours, their illusions, and their enthusiasm to the welfare of their native land? Where are the youth who will generously pour out their blood to wash away so much shame, so much crime, so much abomination? Pure and spotless must the victim be that the sacrifice may be acceptable! Where are you, youth, who will embody in yourselves the vigor of life that has left our veins, the purity of ideas that has been contaminated in our brains, the fire of enthusiasm that has been quenched in our hearts? We await you, O youth! Come, for we await you!"

Feeling his eyes moisten he withdrew his hand from that [362]of the sick man, arose, and went to the

window to gaze out upon the wide surface of the sea. He was drawn from his meditation by gentle raps at the door. It was the servant asking if he should bring a light.

When the priest returned to the sick man and looked at him in the light of the lamp, motionless, his eyes closed, the hand that had pressed his lying open and extended along the edge of the bed, he thought for a moment that he was sleeping, but noticing that he was not breathing touched him gently, and then realized that he was dead. His body had already commenced to turn cold. The priest fell upon his knees and prayed.

When he arose and contemplated the corpse, in whose features were depicted the deepest grief, the tragedy of a whole wasted life which he was carrying over there beyond death, the old man shuddered and murmured, “God have mercy on those who turned him from the straight path!”

While the servants summoned by him fell upon their knees and prayed for the dead man, curious and bewildered as they gazed toward the bed, reciting requiem after requiem, Padre Florentino took from a cabinet the celebrated steel chest that contained

Simoun's fabulous wealth. He hesitated for a moment, then resolutely descended the stairs and made his way to the cliff where Isagani was accustomed to sit and gaze into the depths of the sea.

Padre Florentino looked down at his feet. There below he saw the dark billows of the Pacific beating into the hollows of the cliff, producing sonorous thunder, at the same time that, smitten by the moonbeams, the waves and foam glittered like sparks of fire, like handfuls of diamonds hurled into the air by some jinnee of the abyss. He gazed about him. He was alone. The solitary coast was lost in the distance amid the dim cloud that the moonbeams played through, until it mingled with the horizon. The forest murmured unintelligible sounds.

Then the old man, with an effort of his herculean arms, hurled the chest into space, throwing it toward the sea. It [363]whirled over and over several times and descended rapidly in a slight curve, reflecting the moonlight on its polished surface. The old man saw the drops of water fly and heard a loud splash as the abyss closed over and swallowed up the treasure. He waited for a few moments to see if the depths would restore anything, but the wave rolled on as mysteriously as before, without adding a fold to its

rippling surface, as though into the immensity of the sea a pebble only had been dropped.

"May Nature guard you in her deep abysses among the pearls and corals of her eternal seas," then said the priest, solemnly extending his hands. "When for some holy and sublime purpose man may need you, God will in his wisdom draw you from the bosom of the waves. Meanwhile, there you will not work woe, you will not distort justice, you will not foment avarice!"

[1] In the original the message reads: "Español escondido casa Padre Florentino cojera remitirá vivo muerto." Don Tiburcio understands [353n]*cojera* as referring to himself; there is a play upon the Spanish words *cojera*, lameness, and *cogerá*, a form of the verb *coger*, to seize or capture—*j* and *g* in these two words having the same sound, that of the English *h*.—Tr.

GLOSSARY

abá: A Tagalog exclamation of wonder, surprise, etc., often used to introduce or emphasize a contradictory statement.

alcalde: Governor of a province or district, with both executive and judicial authority.

Ayuntamiento: A city corporation or council, and by extension the building in which it has its offices; specifically, in Manila, the capitol.

balete: The Philippine banyan, a tree sacred in Malay folk-lore.

banka: A dugout canoe with bamboo supports or outriggers.

batalan: The platform of split bamboo attached to a **nipa** house.

batikúlin: A variety of easily-turned wood, used in carving.

bibinka: A sweetmeat made of sugar or molasses and rice-flour, commonly sold in the small shops.

buyera: A woman who prepares and sells the **buyo**.

buyo: The masticatory prepared by wrapping a piece of areca-nut with a little shell-lime in a betel-leaf—the **pan** of British India.

cabesang: Title of a **cabeza de barangay;** given by courtesy to his wife also.

cabeza de barangay: Headman and tax-collector for a group of about fifty families, for whose "tribute" he was personally responsible.

calesa: A two-wheeled chaise with folding top.

calle: Street (Spanish).

camisa: 1. A loose, collarless shirt of transparent material worn by men outside the trousers. 2. A thin, transparent waist with flowing sleeves, worn by women.

capitan: "Captain," a title used in addressing or referring to a gobernadorcillo, or a former occupant of that office.

carambas: A Spanish exclamation denoting surprise or displeasure.

carbineer: Internal-revenue guard.

carromata: A small two-wheeled vehicle with a fixed top.

casco: A flat-bottomed freight barge.

cayman: The Philippine crocodile.

cedula: Certificate of registration and receipt for poll-tax.

chongka: A child's game played with pebbles or cowry-shells.

cigarrera: A woman working in a cigar or cigarette factory.

Civil Guard: Internal quasi-military police force of Spanish officers and native soldiers.

cochero: Carriage driver, coachman.

cuarto: A copper coin, one hundred and sixty of which were equal in value to a silver peso.

filibuster: A native of the Philippines who was accused of advocating their separation from Spain.[366]

filibusterism: See **filibuster**.

gobernadorcillo: "Petty governor," the principal municipal official—also, in Manila, the head of a commercial guild.

gumamela: The hibiscus, common as a garden shrub in the Philippines.

Indian: The Spanish designation for the Christianized Malay of the Philippines was **indio** (Indian), a term used rather contemptuously, the name **Filipino** being generally applied in a restricted sense to the children of Spaniards born in the Islands.

kalan: The small, portable, open, clay fireplace commonly used in cooking.

kalikut: A short section of bamboo for preparing the **buyo**; a primitive betel-box.

kamagon: A tree of the ebony family, from which fine cabinet-wood is obtained. Its fruit is the **mabolo**, or date-plum.

lanete: A variety of timber used in carving.

linintikan: A Tagalog exclamation of disgust or contempt—"thunder!"

Malacañang: The palace of the Captain-General: from the vernacular name of the place where it stands, "fishermen's resort."

Malecon: A drive along the bay shore of Manila, opposite the Walled City.

Mestizo: A person of mixed Filipino and Spanish blood; sometimes applied also to a person of mixed Filipino and Chinese blood.

nakú: A Tagalog exclamation of surprise, wonder, etc.

narra: The Philippine mahogany.

nipa: Swamp palm, with the imbricated leaves of which the roofs and sides of the common native houses are constructed.

novena: A devotion consisting of prayers recited for nine consecutive days, asking for some special favor; also, a booklet of these prayers.

panguingui: A complicated card-game, generally for small stakes, played with a monte deck.

panguinguera: A woman addicted to **panguingui**, this being chiefly a feminine diversion in the Philippines.

pansit: A soup made of Chinese vermicelli.

pansitería: A shop where **pansit** is prepared and sold.

pañuelo: A starched neckerchief folded stiffly over the shoulders, fastened in front and falling in a point

behind: the most distinctive portion of the customary dress of Filipino women.

peso: A silver coin, either the Spanish peso or the Mexican dollar, about the size of an American dollar and of approximately half its value.

petate: Sleeping-mat woven from palm leaves.

piña: Fine cloth made from pineapple-leaf fibers.

Provincial: The head of a religious order in the Philippines.

puñales: “Daggers!”

querida: A paramour, mistress: from the Spanish “beloved.”

real: One-eighth of a peso, twenty cuartos.

sala: The principal room in the more pretentious Philippine houses.

salakot: Wide hat of palm or bamboo, distinctively Filipino.

sampaguita: The Arabian jasmine: a small, white, very fragrant flower, extensively cultivated, and worn in chaplets and rosaries by women and girls—the typical Philippine flower.[367]

sipa: A game played with a hollow ball of plaited bamboo or rattan, by boys standing in a circle, who by kicking it with their heels endeavor to keep it from striking the ground.

soltada: A bout between fighting-cocks.

'Susmariosep: A common exclamation: contraction of the Spanish, **Jesús, María, y José**, the Holy Family.

tabi: The cry used by carriage drivers to warn pedestrians.

tabú: A utensil fashioned from half of a coconut shell.

tajú: A thick beverage prepared from bean-meal and syrup.

tampipi: A telescopic basket of woven palm, bamboo, or rattan.

Tandang: A title of respect for an old man: from the Tagalog term for "old."

tapis: A piece of dark cloth or lace, often richly worked or embroidered, worn at the waist somewhat in the fashion of an apron; a distinctive portion of the

native women's attire, especially among the Tagalogs.

tatakut: The Tagalog term for "fear."

teniente-mayor: "Senior lieutenant," the senior member of the town council and substitute for the gobernadorcillo.

tertiary sister: A member of a lay society affiliated with a regular monastic order.

tienda: A shop or stall for the sale of merchandise.

tikbalang: An evil spirit, capable of assuming various forms, but said to appear usually as a tall black man with disproportionately long legs: the "bogey man" of Tagalog children.

tulisan: Outlaw, bandit. Under the old régime in the Philippines the **tulisanes** were those who, on account of real or fancied grievances against the authorities, or from fear of punishment for crime, or from an instinctive desire to return to primitive simplicity, foreswore life in the towns "under the bell," and made their homes in the mountains or other remote places. Gathered in small bands with such arms as they could secure, they sustained themselves by

highway robbery and the levying of black-mail from the country folk.

The Social Cancer

A Complete English Version of Noli Me Tangere from the Spanish of

José Rizal

By

Charles Derbyshire

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[iv]

[Contents]

THE NOVELS OF JOSÉ RIZAL

Translated from Spanish into English

BY CHARLES DERBYSHIRE

- THE SOCIAL CANCER (NOLI ME TANGERE)
- THE REIGN OF GREED (EL FILIBUSTERISMO)

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[Contents]

Translator's Introduction

I

"We travel rapidly in these historical sketches. The reader flies in his express train in a few minutes through a couple of centuries. The centuries pass more slowly to those to whom the years are doled out day by day. Institutions grow and beneficently develop themselves, making their way into the hearts of generations which are shorter-lived than they, attracting love and respect, and winning loyal obedience; and then as gradually forfeiting by their shortcomings the allegiance which had been honorably gained in worthier periods. We see wealth and greatness; we see corruption and vice; and one seems to follow so close upon the other, that we fancy they must have always co-existed. We look more steadily, and we perceive long periods of time, in which there is first a growth and then a decay, like what we perceive in a tree of the forest."

FROUDE, *Annals of an English Abbey*.

Monasticism's record in the Philippines presents no new general fact to the eye of history. The attempt to eliminate the eternal feminine from her natural and normal sphere in the scheme of things there met with the same certain and signal disaster that awaits every perversion of human activity. Beginning with a band of zealous, earnest men, sincere in their convictions, to whom the cause was all and their personalities nothing, it there, as elsewhere, passed through its usual cycle of usefulness, stagnation, corruption, and degeneration.

To the unselfish and heroic efforts of the early friars Spain in large measure owed her dominion over the Philippine Islands and the Filipinos a marked advance on the road to civilization and nationality. In fact, after the dreams of sudden wealth from gold and spices had faded, the islands were retained chiefly as a missionary conquest and a stepping-stone to the broader fields of Asia, with Manila as a depot for the Oriental trade. The records of those early years are filled with tales of courage and heroism worthy of Spain's proudest years, as [vi]the missionary fathers labored with unflagging zeal in disinterested endeavor for the spread of the Faith and the betterment of the condition of the Malays among whom they found themselves. They won the confidence of the native peoples, gathered them into settlements and villages, led them into the ways of peace, and became their protectors, guides, and counselors.

In those times the cross and the sword went hand in hand, but in the Philippines the latter was rarely needed or used. The lightness and vivacity of the Spanish character, with its strain of Orientalism, its fertility of

resource in meeting new conditions, its adaptability in dealing with the dwellers in warmer lands, all played their part in this as in the other conquests. Only on occasions when some stubborn resistance was met with, as in Manila and the surrounding country, where the most advanced of the native peoples dwelt and where some of the forms and beliefs of Islam had been established, was it necessary to resort to violence to destroy the native leaders and replace them with the missionary fathers. A few sallies by young Salcedo, the Cortez of the Philippine conquest, with a company of the splendid infantry, which was at that time the admiration and despair of martial Europe, soon effectively exorcised any idea of resistance that even the boldest and most intransigent of the native leaders might have entertained.

For the most part, no great persuasion was needed to turn a simple, imaginative, fatalistic people from a few vague animistic deities to the systematic iconology and the elaborate ritual of the Spanish Church. An obscure *Bathala* or a dim *Malyari* was easily superseded by or transformed into a clearly defined *Diós*, and in the case of any especially tenacious "demon," he could without much difficulty be merged into a Christian saint or devil. There was no organized priesthood to be overcome, the primitive religious observances consisting almost entirely of occasional orgies presided over by an old woman, who filled the priestly offices of interpreter for the unseen powers and chief eater at the sacrificial feast. With their unflagging zeal, their organization, their elaborate forms and ceremonies, the missionaries were enabled to win the confidence of the natives, especially as the greater part of them learned the local language and identified their lives with the [vii]communities under their care. Accordingly, the people took kindly to their new teachers and rulers, so that in less than a generation Spanish authority was generally recognized in the settled portions of the Philippines, and in the succeeding years the missionaries gradually extended this area by forming settlements from among the wilder peoples, whom they persuaded to abandon the more objectionable features of their old roving, often predatory, life and to group themselves into towns and villages "under the bell."

The tactics employed in the conquest and the subsequent behavior of the conquerors were true to the old Spanish nature, so succinctly characterized by a plain-spoken Englishman of Mary's reign, when the war-cry of Castile

encircled the globe and even hoveredominously near the "sceptered isle," when in the intoxication of power character stands out so sharply defined: "They be verye wyse and politicke, and can, thorowe ther wysdome, reform and brydell theyr owne natures for a tyme, and applye ther conditions to the manners of those men with whom they meddell gladlye by friendshippe; whose mischievous maners a man shall never know untyll he come under ther subjection; but then shall he parfectlye parceve and fele them: for in dissimulations untyll they have ther purposes, and afterwards in oppression and tyrannye, when they can obtain them, they do exceed all other nations upon the earthe."[1]

In the working out of this spirit, with all the indomitable courage and fanatical ardor derived from the long contests with the Moors, they reduced the native peoples to submission, but still not to the galling yoke which they fastened upon the aborigines of America, to make one Las Casas shine amid the horde of Pizarros. There was some compulsory labor in timber-cutting and ship-building, with enforced military service as rowers and soldiers for expeditions to the Moluccas and the coasts of Asia, but nowhere the unspeakable atrocities which in Mexico, Hispaniola, and South America drove mothers to strangle their babes at birth and whole tribes to prefer self-immolation to the living death in the mines and slave-pens. Quite differently from the case in America, where entire islands and districts were depopulated, to bring on later the curse of negro slavery, in the Philippines the fact appears that the [viii]native population really increased and the standard of living was raised under the stern, yet beneficent, tutelage of the missionary fathers. The great distance and the hardships of the journey precluded the coming of many irresponsible adventurers from Spain and, fortunately for the native population, no great mineral wealth was ever discovered in the Philippine Islands.

The system of government was, in its essential features, a simple one. The missionary priests drew the inhabitants of the towns and villages about themselves or formed new settlements, and with profuse use of symbol and symbolism taught the people the Faith, laying particular stress upon "the fear of God," as administered by them, reconciling the people to their subjection by inculcating the Christian virtues of patience and humility. When any recalcitrants refused to accept the new order, or later showed an inclination to break away from it, the military forces, acting usually under

secret directions from the padre, made raids in the disaffected parts with all the unpitying atrocity the Spanish soldiery were ever capable of displaying in their dealings with a weaker people. After sufficient punishment had been inflicted and a wholesome fear inspired, the padre very opportunely interfered in the natives' behalf, by which means they were convinced that peace and security lay in submission to the authorities, especially to the curate of their town or district. A single example will suffice to make the method clear: not an isolated instance but a typical case chosen from among the mass of records left by the chief actors themselves.

Fray Domingo Perez, evidently a man of courage and conviction, for he later lost his life in the work of which he wrote, was the Dominican vicar on the Zambales coast when that Order temporarily took over the district from the Recollects. In a report written for his superior in 1680 he outlines the method clearly: "In order that those whom we have assembled in the three villages may persevere in their settlements, the most efficacious fear and the one most suited to their nature is that the Spaniards of the fort and presidio of Paynaven[2] of whom [ix]they have a very great fear, may come very often to the said villages and overrun the land, and penetrate even into their old recesses where they formerly lived; and if perchance they should find anything planted in the said recesses that they would destroy it and cut it down without leaving them anything. And so that they may see the father protects them, when the said Spaniards come to the village, the father opposes them and takes the part of the Indians. But it is always necessary in this matter for the soldiers to conquer, and the father is always very careful always to inform the Spaniards by whom and where anything is planted which it may be necessary to destroy, and that the edicts which his Lordship, the governor, sent them be carried out .... But at all events said Spaniards are to make no trouble for the Indians whom they find in the villages, but rather must treat them well."[3]

This in 1680: the Dominican transcriber of the record in 1906 has added a very illuminating note, revealing the immutability of the system and showing that the rulers possessed in a superlative degree the Bourbonesque trait of learning nothing and forgetting nothing: "Even when I was a missionary to the heathens from 1882 to 1892, I had occasion to observe the said policy, to inform the chief of the fortress of the measures that he ought

to take, and to make a false show on the other side so that it might have no influence on the fortress."

Thus it stands out in bold relief as a system built up and maintained by fraud and force, bound in the course of nature to last only as long as the deception could be carried on and the repressive force kept up to sufficient strength. Its maintenance required that the different sections be isolated from each other so that there could be no growth toward a common understanding and coöperation, and its permanence depended upon keeping the people ignorant and contented with their lot, held under strict control by religious and political fear.

Yet it was a vast improvement over their old mode of life [x]and their condition was bettered as they grew up to such a system. Only with the passing of the years and the increase of wealth and influence, the ease and luxury invited by these, and the consequent corruption so induced, with the insatiable longing ever for more wealth and greater influence, did the poison of greed and grasping power enter the system to work its insidious way into every part, slowly transforming the beneficent institution of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries into an incubus weighing upon all the activities of the people in the nineteenth, an unyielding bar to the development of the country, a hideous anachronism in these modern times.
It must be remembered also that Spain, in the years following her brilliant conquests of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, lost strength and vigor through the corruption at home induced by the unearned wealth that flowed into the mother country from the colonies, and by the draining away of her best blood. Nor did her sons ever develop that economic spirit which is the permanent foundation of all empire, but they let the wealth of the Indies flow through their country, principally to London and Amsterdam, there to form in more practical hands the basis of the British and Dutch colonial empires.

The priest and the soldier were supreme, so her best sons took up either the cross or the sword to maintain her dominion in the distant colonies, a movement which, long continued, spelled for her a form of national suicide. The soldier expended his strength and generally laid down his life on alien soil, leaving no fit successor of his own stock to carry on the work according to his standards. The priest under the celibate system, in its better

days left no offspring at all and in the days of its corruption none bred and reared under the influences that make for social and political progress. The dark chambers of the Inquisition stifled all advance in thought, so the civilization and the culture of Spain, as well as her political system, settled into rigid forms to await only the inevitable process of stagnation and decay. In her proudest hour an old soldier, who had lost one of his hands fighting her battles against the Turk at Lepanto, employed the other in writing the masterpiece of her literature, which is really a caricature of the nation.

There is much in the career of Spain that calls to mind the [xi]dazzling beauty of her "dark-glancing daughters," with its early bloom, its startling —almost morbid—brilliance, and its premature decay. Rapid and brilliant was her rise, gradual and inglorious her steady decline, from the bright morning when the banners of Castile and Aragon were flung triumphantly from the battlements of the Alhambra, to the short summer, not so long gone, when at Cavite and Santiago with swift, decisive havoc the last ragged remnants of the once world-dominating power were blown into space and time, to hover disembodied there, a lesson and a warning to future generations. Whatever her final place in the records of mankind, whether as the pioneer of modern civilization or the buccaneer of the nations or, as would seem most likely, a goodly mixture of both, she has at least—with the exception only of her great mother, Rome—furnished the most instructive lessons in political pathology yet recorded, and the advice to students of world progress to familiarize themselves with her history is even more apt today than when it first issued from the encyclopedic mind of Macaulay nearly a century ago. Hardly had she reached the zenith of her power when the disintegration began, and one by one her brilliant conquests dropped away, to leave her alone in her faded splendor, with naught but her vaunting pride left, another "Niobe of nations." In the countries more in contact with the trend of civilization and more susceptible to revolutionary influences from the mother country this separation came from within, while in the remoter parts the archaic and outgrown system dragged along until a stronger force from without destroyed it.

Nowhere was the crystallization of form and principle more pronounced than in religious life, which fastened upon the mother country a deadening weight that hampered all progress, and in the colonies, notably in the

Philippines, virtually converted her government into a hagiarchy that had its face toward the past and either could not or would not move with the current of the times. So, when "the shot heard round the world," the declaration of humanity's right to be and to become, in its all-encircling sweep, reached the lands controlled by her it was coldly received and blindly rejected by the governing powers, and there was left only the slower, subtler, but none the less sure, process of working its way among the people [xii]to burst in time in rebellion and the destruction of the conservative forces that would repress it.

In the opening years of the nineteenth century the friar orders in the Philippines had reached the apogee of their power and usefulness. Their influence was everywhere felt and acknowledged, while the country still prospered under the effects of the vigorous and progressive administrations of Anda and Vargas in the preceding century. Native levies had fought loyally under Spanish leadership against Dutch and British invaders, or in suppressing local revolts among their own people, which were always due to some specific grievance, never directed definitely against the Spanish sovereignty. The Philippines were shut off from contact with any country but Spain, and even this communication was restricted and carefully guarded. There was an elaborate central government which, however, hardly touched the life of the native peoples, who were guided and governed by the parish priests, each town being in a way an independent entity.

Of this halcyon period, just before the process of disintegration began, there has fortunately been left a record which may be characterized as the most notable Spanish literary production relating to the Philippines, being the calm, sympathetic, judicial account of one who had spent his manhood in the work there and who, full of years and experience, sat down to tell the story of their life.4 In it there are no puerile whinings, no querulous curses that tropical Malays do not order their lives as did the people of the Spanish village where he may have been reared, no selfish laments of ingratitude over blessings unasked and only imperfectly understood by the natives, no fatuous self-deception as to the real conditions, but a patient consideration of the difficulties encountered, the [xiii]good accomplished, and the unavoidable evils incident to any human work. The country and the people, too, are described with the charming simplicity of the eyes that see clearly,

the brain that ponders deeply, and the heart that beats sympathetically. Through all the pages of his account runs the quiet strain of peace and contentment, of satisfaction with the existing order, for he had looked upon the creation and saw that it was good. There is “neither haste, nor hate, nor anger,” but the deliberate recital of the facts warmed and illumined by the geniality of a soul to whom age and experience had brought, not a sour cynicism, but the mellowing influence of a ripened philosophy. He was such an old man as may fondly be imagined walking through the streets of Parañaque in stately benignity amid the fear and respect of the brown people over whom he watched.

But in all his chronicle there is no suggestion of anything more to hope for, anything beyond. Beautiful as the picture is, it is that of a system which had reached maturity: a condition of stagnation, not of growth. In less than a decade, the terrific convulsions in European politics made themselves felt even in the remote Philippines, and then began the gradual drawing away of the people from their rulers—blind gropings and erratic wanderings at first, but nevertheless persistent and vigorous tendencies.

The first notable influence was the admission of representatives for the Philippines into the Spanish Cortes under the revolutionary governments and the abolition of the trade monopoly with Mexico. The last galleon reached Manila in 1815, and soon foreign commercial interests were permitted, in a restricted way, to enter the country. Then with the separation of Mexico and the other American colonies from Spain a more marked change was brought about in that direct communication was established with the mother country, and the absolutism of the hagiarchy first questioned by the numbers of Peninsular Spaniards who entered the islands to trade, some even to settle and rear families there. These also affected the native population in the larger centers by the spread of their ideas, which were not always in conformity with those that for several centuries the friars had been inculcating into their wards. Moreover, there was a not-inconsiderable portion [xiv]of the population, sprung from the friars themselves, who were eager to adopt the customs and ideas of the Spanish immigrants.

The suppression of many of the monasteries in Spain in 1835 caused a large influx of the disestablished monks into the Philippines in search for a haven, and a home, thus bringing about a conflict with the native clergy,

who were displaced from their best holdings to provide berths for the newcomers. At the same time, the increase of education among the native priests brought the natural demand for more equitable treatment by the Spanish friar, so insistent that it even broke out into open rebellion in 1843 on the part of a young Tagalog who thought himself aggrieved in this respect.

Thus the struggle went on, with stagnation above and some growth below, so that the governors were ever getting further away from the governed, and for such a movement there is in the course of nature but one inevitable result, especially when outside influences are actively at work penetrating the social system and making for better things. Among these influences four cumulative ones may be noted: the spread of journalism, the introduction of steamships into the Philippines, the return of the Jesuits, and the opening of the Suez Canal.

The printing-press entered the islands with the conquest, but its use had been strictly confined to religious works until about the middle of the past century, when there was a sudden awakening and within a few years five journals were being published. In 1848 appeared the first regular newspaper of importance, *El Diario de Manila*, and about a decade later the principal organ of the Spanish-Filipino population, *El Comercio*, which, with varying vicissitudes, has continued down to the present. While rigorously censored, both politically and religiously, and accessible to only an infinitesimal portion of the people, they still performed the service of letting a few rays of light into the Cimmerian intellectual gloom of the time and place.

With the coming of steam navigation communication between the different parts of the islands was facilitated and trade encouraged, with all that such a change meant in the way of breaking up the old isolation and tending to a common understanding. Spanish power, too, was for the moment more firmly established, and Moro piracy in Luzon and the Bisayan [xv]Islands, which had been so great a drawback to the development of the country, was forever ended.

The return of the Jesuits produced two general results tending to dissatisfaction with the existing order. To them was assigned the missionary field of Mindanao, which meant the displacement of the Recollect Fathers in the missions there, and for these other berths had to be found. Again the

native clergy were the losers in that they had to give up their best parishes in Luzon, especially around Manila and Cavite, so the breach was further widened and the soil sown with discontent. But more far-reaching than this immediate result was the educational movement inaugurated by the Jesuits. The native, already feeling the vague impulses from without and stirred by the growing restlessness of the times, here saw a new world open before him. A considerable portion of the native population in the larger centers, who had shared in the economic progress of the colony, were enabled to look beyond their daily needs and to afford their children an opportunity for study and advancement—a condition and a need met by the Jesuits for a time.

With the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 communication with the mother country became cheaper, quicker, surer, so that large numbers of Spaniards, many of them in sympathy with the republican movements at home, came to the Philippines in search of fortunes and generally left half-caste families who had imbibed their ideas. Native boys who had already felt the intoxication of such learning as the schools of Manila afforded them began to dream of greater wonders in Spain, now that the journey was possible for them. So began the definite movements that led directly to the disintegration of the friar régime.

In the same year occurred the revolution in the mother country, which had tired of the old corrupt despotism. Isabella II was driven into exile and the country left to waver about uncertainly for several years, passing through all the stages of government from red radicalism to absolute conservatism, finally adjusting itself to the middle course of constitutional monarchism. During the effervescent and ephemeral republic there was sent to the Philippines a governor who set to work to modify the old system and establish [xvi]a government more in harmony with modern ideas and more democratic in form. His changes were hailed with delight by the growing class of Filipinos who were striving for more consideration in their own country, and who, in their enthusiasm and the intoxication of the moment, perhaps became more radical than was safe under the conditions—surely too radical for their religious guides watching and waiting behind the veil of the temple.

In January, 1872, an uprising occurred in the naval arsenal at Cavite, with a Spanish non-commissioned officer as one of the leaders. From the meager

evidence now obtainable, this would seem to have been purely a local mutiny over the service questions of pay and treatment, but in it the friars saw their opportunity. It was blazoned forth, with all the wild panic that was to characterize the actions of the governing powers from that time on, as the premature outbreak of a general insurrection under the leadership of the native clergy, and rigorous repressive measures were demanded. Three native priests, notable for their popularity among their own people, one an octogenarian and the other two young canons of the Manila Cathedral, were summarily garroted, along with the renegade Spanish officer who had participated in the mutiny. No record of any trial of these priests has ever been brought to light. The Archbishop, himself a secular[5] clergyman, stoutly refused to degrade them from their holy office, and they wore their sacerdotal robes at the execution, which was conducted in a hurried, fearful manner. At the same time a number of young Manilans who had taken conspicuous part in the "liberal" demonstrations were deported to the Ladrone Islands or to remote islands of the Philippine group itself.

This was the beginning of the end. Yet there immediately followed the delusive calm which ever precedes the fatal outburst, lulling those marked for destruction to a delusive security. The two decades following were years of quiet, unobtrusive growth, during which the Philippine Islands made the greatest economic progress in their history. But this in itself was preparing the final catastrophe, for if there be any fact well established in human experience it is that with [xvii]economic development the power of organized religion begins to wane—the rise of the merchant spells the decline of the priest. A sordid change, from masses and mysteries to sugar and shoes, this is often said to be, but it should be noted that the epochs of greatest economic activity have been those during which the generality of mankind have lived fuller and freer lives, and above all that in such eras the finest intellects and the grandest souls have been developed.

Nor does an institution that has been slowly growing for three centuries, molding the very life and fiber of the people, disintegrate without a violent struggle, either in its own constitution or in the life of the people trained under it. Not only the ecclesiastical but also the social and political system of the country was controlled by the religious orders, often silently and secretly, but none the less effectively. This is evident from the ceaseless conflict that went on between the religious orders and the Spanish political

administrators, who were at every turn thwarted in their efforts to keep the government abreast of the times.

The shock of the affair of 1872 had apparently stunned the Filipinos, but it had at the same time brought them to the parting of the ways and induced a vague feeling that there was something radically wrong, which could only be righted by a closer union among themselves. They began to consider that their interests and those of the governing powers were not the same. In these feelings of distrust toward the friars they were stimulated by the great numbers of immigrant Spaniards who were then entering the country, many of whom had taken part in the republican movements at home and who, upon the restoration of the monarchy, no doubt thought it safer for them to be at as great a distance as possible from the throne. The young Filipinos studying in Spain came from different parts of the islands, and by their association there in a foreign land were learning to forget their narrow sectionalism; hence the way was being prepared for some concerted action. Thus, aided and encouraged by the anti-clerical Spaniards in the mother country, there was growing up a new generation of native leaders, who looked toward something better than the old system.

It is with this period in the history of the country—the [xviii]author's boyhood—that the story of *Noli Me Tangere* deals. Typical scenes and characters are sketched from life with wonderful accuracy, and the picture presented is that of a master-mind, who knew and loved his subject. Terror and repression were the order of the day, with ever a growing unrest in the higher circles, while the native population at large seemed to be completely *cowed*—"brutalized" is the term repeatedly used by Rizal in his political essays. Spanish writers of the period, observing only the superficial movements,—some of which were indeed fantastical enough, for

> "they,
> Who in oppression's darkness caved have dwelt,
> They are not eagles, nourished with the day;
> What marvel, then, at times, if they mistake their way?"

—and not heeding the currents at work below, take great delight in ridiculing the pretensions of the young men seeking advancement, while they indulge in coarse ribaldry over the wretched condition of the great mass of the "Indians." The author, however, himself a "miserable Indian," vividly depicts the unnatural conditions and dominant characters produced

under the outworn system of fraud and force, at the same time presenting his people as living, feeling, struggling individuals, with all the frailties of human nature and all the possibilities of mankind, either for good or evil; incidentally he throws into marked contrast the despicable depreciation used by the Spanish writers in referring to the Filipinos, making clear the application of the self-evident proposition that no ordinary human being in the presence of superior force can very well conduct himself as a man unless he be treated as such.

The friar orders, deluded by their transient triumph and secure in their pride of place, became more arrogant, more domineering than ever. In the general administration the political rulers were at every turn thwarted, their best efforts frustrated, and if they ventured too far their own security threatened; for in the three-cornered wrangle which lasted throughout the whole of the Spanish domination, the friar orders had, in addition to the strength derived from their organization and their wealth, the Damoclean weapon of control over the natives to hang above the heads of both governor and [xix]archbishop. The curates in the towns, always the real rulers, became veritable despots, so that no voice dared to raise itself against them, even in the midst of conditions which the humblest *indio* was beginning to feel dumbly to be perverted and unnatural, and that, too, after three centuries of training under the system that he had ever been taught to accept as "the will of God."

The friars seemed long since to have forgotten those noble aims that had meant so much to the founders and early workers of their orders, if indeed the great majority of those of the later day had ever realized the meaning of their office, for the Spanish writers of the time delight in characterizing them as the meanest of the Spanish peasantry, when not something worse, who had been "lassoed," taught a few ritualistic prayers, and shipped to the Philippines to be placed in isolated towns as lords and masters of the native population, with all the power and prestige over a docile people that the sacredness of their holy office gave them. These writers treat the matter lightly, seeing in it rather a huge joke on the "miserable Indians," and give the friars great credit for "patriotism," a term which in this connection they dragged from depth to depth until it quite aptly fitted Dr. Johnson's famous definition, "the last refuge of a scoundrel."

In their conduct the religious corporations, both as societies and as individuals, must be estimated according to their own standards—the application of any other criterion would be palpably unfair. They undertook to hold the native in subjection, to regulate the essential activities of his life according to their ideas, so upon them must fall the responsibility for the conditions finally attained: to destroy the freedom of the subject and then attempt to blame him for his conduct is a paradox into which the learned men often fell, perhaps inadvertently through their deductive logic. They endeavored to shape the lives of their Malay wards not only in this existence but also in the next. Their vows were poverty, chastity, and obedience.

The vow of poverty was early relegated to the limbo of neglect. Only a few years after the founding of Manila royal decrees began to issue on the subject of complaints received by the King over the usurpation of lands on the part of the [xx]priests. Using the same methods so familiar in the heyday of the institution of monasticism in Europe—pious gifts, deathbed bequests, pilgrims' offerings—the friar orders gradually secured the richest of the arable lands in the more thickly settled portions of the Philippines, notably the part of Luzon occupied by the Tagalogs. Not always, however, it must in justice be recorded, were such doubtful means resorted to, for there were instances where the missionary was the pioneer, gathering about himself a band of devoted natives and plunging into the unsettled parts to build up a town with its fields around it, which would later become a friar estate. With the accumulated incomes from these estates and the fees for religious observances that poured into their treasuries, the orders in their nature of perpetual corporations became the masters of the situation, the lords of the country. But this condition was not altogether objectionable; it was in the excess of their greed that they went astray, for the native peoples had been living under this system through generations and not until they began to feel that they were not receiving fair treatment did they question the authority of a power which not only secured them a peaceful existence in this life but also assured them eternal felicity in the next.

With only the shining exceptions that are produced in any system, no matter how false its premises or how decadent it may become, to uphold faith in the intrinsic soundness of human nature, the vow of chastity was never much more than a myth. Through the tremendous influence exerted over a

fanatically religious people, who implicitly followed the teachings of the reverend fathers, once their confidence had been secured, the curate was seldom to be gainsaid in his desires. By means of the secret influence in the confessional and the more open political power wielded by him, the fairest was his to command, and the favored one and her people looked upon the choice more as an honor than otherwise, for besides the social standing that it gave her there was the proud prospect of becoming the mother of children who could claim kinship with the dominant race. The curate's "companion" or the sacristan's wife was a power in the community, her family was raised to a place of importance and influence among their own people, while she and her ecclesiastical [xxi]offspring were well cared for. On the death or removal of the curate, it was almost invariably found that she had been provided with a husband or protector and a not inconsiderable amount of property—an arrangement rather appealing to a people among whom the means of living have ever been so insecure.

That this practise was not particularly offensive to the people among whom they dwelt may explain the situation, but to claim that it excuses the friars approaches dangerously close to casuistry. Still, as long as this arrangement was decently and moderately carried out, there seems to have been no great objection, nor from a worldly point of view, with all the conditions considered, could there be much. But the old story of excess, of unbridled power turned toward bad ends, again recurs, at the same time that the ideas brought in by the Spaniards who came each year in increasing numbers and the principles observed by the young men studying in Europe cast doubt upon the fitness of such a state of affairs. As they approached their downfall, like all mankind, the friars became more open, more insolent, more shameless, in their conduct.

The story of Maria Clara, as told in *Noli Me Tangere*, is by no means an exaggerated instance, but rather one of the few clean enough to bear the light, and her fate, as depicted in the epilogue, is said to be based upon an actual occurrence with which the author must have been familiar.

The vow of obedience—whether considered as to the Pope, their highest religious authority, or to the King of Spain, their political liege—might not always be so callously disregarded, but it could be evaded and defied. From the Vatican came bull after bull, from the Escorial decree after decree, only to be archived in Manila, sometimes after a hollow pretense of compliance.

A large part of the records of Spanish domination is taken up with the wearisome quarrels that went on between the Archbishop, representing the head of the Church, and the friar orders, over the questions of the episcopal visitation and the enforcement of the provisions of the Council of Trent relegating the monks to their original status of missionaries, with the friars invariably victorious in their contentions. Royal decrees ordering inquiries into the titles to the estates of the men of poverty and those providing for the education of [xxii]the natives in Spanish were merely sneered at and left to molder in harmless quiet. Not without good grounds for his contention, the friar claimed that the Spanish dominion over the Philippines depended upon him, and he therefore confidently set himself up as the best judge of how that dominion should be maintained.

Thus there are presented in the Philippines of the closing quarter of the century just past the phenomena so frequently met with in modern societies, so disheartening to the people who must drag out their lives under them, of an old system which has outworn its usefulness and is being called into question, with forces actively at work disintegrating it, yet with the unhappy folk bred and reared under it unprepared for a new order of things. The old faith was breaking down, its forms and beliefs, once so full of life and meaning, were being sharply examined, doubt and suspicion were the order of the day. Moreover, it must ever be borne in mind that in the Philippines this unrest, except in the parts where the friars were the landlords, was not general among the people, the masses of whom were still sunk in their "loved Egyptian night," but affected only a very small proportion of the population—for the most part young men who were groping their way toward something better, yet without any very clearly conceived idea of what that better might be, and among whom was to be found the usual sprinkling of "sunshine patriots" and omnipresent opportunists ready for any kind of trouble that will afford them a chance to rise.

Add to the apathy of the masses dragging out their vacant lives amid the shadows of religious superstition and to the unrest of the few, the fact that the orders were in absolute control of the political machinery of the country, with the best part of the agrarian wealth amortized in their hands; add also the ever-present jealousies, petty feuds, and racial hatreds, for which Manila and the Philippines, with their medley of creeds and races, offer such a fertile field, all fostered by the governing class for the maintenance of the

old Machiavelian principle of "divide and rule," and the sum is about the most miserable condition under which any portion of mankind ever tried to fulfill nature's inexorable laws of growth.[xxiii]

II

And third came she who gives dark creeds their power,
Silabbat-paramasa, sorceress,
Draped fair in many lands as lowly Faith,
But ever juggling souls with rites and prayers;
The keeper of those keys which lock up Hells
And open Heavens. "Wilt thou dare," she said,
"Put by our sacred books, dethrone our gods,
Unpeople all the temples, shaking down
That law which feeds the priests and props the realm?"
But Buddha answered, "What thou bidd'st me keep
Is form which passes, but the free Truth stands;
Get thee unto thy darkness."
SIR EDWIN ARNOLD, *The Light of Asia*.

"Ah, simple people, how little do you know the blessing that you enjoy! Neither hunger, nor nakedness, nor inclemency of the weather troubles you. With the payment of seven reals per year, you remain free of contributions. You do not have to close your houses with bolts. You do not fear that the district troopers will come in to lay waste your fields, and trample you under foot at your own firesides. You call 'father' the one who is in command over you. Perhaps there will come a time when you will be more civilized, and you will break out in revolution; and you will wake terrified, at the tumult of the riots, and will see blood flowing through these quiet fields, and gallows and guillotines erected in these squares, which never yet have seen an execution."6 Thus moralized a Spanish traveler in 1842, just as that *dolce far niente* was drawing to its close. Already far-seeing men had begun to raise in the Spanish parliament the question of the future of the Philippines, looking toward some definite program for their care under modern conditions and for the adjustment of their [xxiv]relations with the mother country. But these were mere Cassandra-voices—the horologe of time was striking for Rome's successor, as it did for Rome herself.

Just where will come the outbreak after three centuries of mind-repression and soul-distortion, of forcing a growing subject into the strait-jacket of medieval thought and action, of natural selection reversed by the constant elimination of native initiative and leadership, is indeed a curious study. That there will be an outbreak somewhere is as certain as that the plant will

grow toward the light, even under the most unfavorable conditions, for man's nature is but the resultant of eternal forces that ceaselessly and irresistibly interplay about and upon him, and somewhere this resultant will express itself in thought or deed.

After three centuries of Spanish ecclesiastical domination in the Philippines, it was to be expected that the wards would turn against their mentors the methods that had been used upon them, nor is it especially remarkable that there was a decided tendency in some parts to revert to primitive barbarism, but that concurrently a creative genius—a bard or seer—should have been developed among a people who, as a whole, have hardly passed through the clan or village stage of society, can be regarded as little less than a psychological phenomenon, and provokes the perhaps presumptuous inquiry as to whether there may not be some things about our common human nature that the learned doctors have not yet included in their anthropometric diagrams.

On the western shore of the Lake of Bay in the heart of the Philippines clusters the village of Kalamba, first established by the Jesuit Fathers in the early days of the conquest, and upon their expulsion in 1767 taken over by the Crown, which later transferred it to the Dominicans, under whose care the fertile fields about it became one of the richest of the friar estates. It can hardly be called a town, even for the Philippines, but is rather a market-village, set as it is at the outlet of the rich country of northern Batangas on the open waterway to Manila and the outside world. Around it flourish the green rice-fields, while Mount Makiling towers majestically near in her moods of cloud and sunshine, overlooking the picturesque curve of the shore and the rippling waters of the [xxv]lake. Shadowy to the eastward gleam the purple crests of Banahao and Cristobal, and but a few miles to the southwestward dim-thundering, seething, earth-rocking Taal mutters and moans of the world's birth-throes. It is the center of a region rich in native lore and legend, as it sleeps through the dusty noons when the cacao leaves droop with the heat and dreams through the silvery nights, waking twice or thrice a week to the endless babble and ceaseless chatter of an Oriental market where the noisy throngs make of their trading as much a matter of pleasure and recreation as of business.

Directly opposite this market-place, in a house facing the village church, there was born in 1861 into the already large family of one of the more

prosperous tenants on the Dominican estate a boy who was to combine in his person the finest traits of the Oriental character with the best that Spanish and European culture could add, on whom would fall the burden of his people's woes to lead him over the*via dolorosa* of struggle and sacrifice, ending in his own destruction amid the crumbling ruins of the system whose disintegration he himself had done so much to compass.

José Rizal-Mercado y Alonso, as his name emerges from the confusion of Filipino nomenclature, was of Malay extraction, with some distant strains of Spanish and Chinese blood. His genealogy reveals several persons remarkable for intellect and independence of character, notably a Philippine Eloise and Abelard, who, drawn together by their common enthusiasm for study and learning, became his maternal grandparents, as well as a great-uncle who was a traveler and student and who directed the boy's early studies. Thus from the beginning his training was exceptional, while his mind was stirred by the trouble already brewing in his community, and from the earliest hours of consciousness he saw about him the wrongs and injustices which overgrown power will ever develop in dealing with a weaker subject. One fact of his childhood, too, stands out clearly, well worthy of record: his mother seems to have been a woman of more than ordinary education for the time and place, and, pleased with the boy's quick intelligence, she taught him to read Spanish from a copy of the Vulgate in that language, which she had somehow managed to secure and keep in her possession—the old, old[xxvi]story of the Woman and the Book, repeated often enough under strange circumstances, but under none stranger than these. The boy's father was well-to-do, so he was sent at the age of eight to study in the new Jesuit school in Manila, not however before he had already inspired some awe in his simple neighbors by the facility with which he composed verses in his native tongue.

He began his studies in a private house while waiting for an opportunity to enter the Ateneo, as the Jesuit school is called, and while there he saw one of his tutors, Padre Burgos, haled to an ignominious death on the garrote as a result of the affair of 1872. This made a deep impression on his childish mind and, in fact, seems to have been one of the principal factors in molding his ideas and shaping his career. That the effect upon him was lasting and that his later judgment confirmed him in the belief that a great injustice had been done, are shown by the fact that his second important

work, *El Filibusterismo*, written about 1891, and miscalled by himself a "novel," for it is really a series of word-paintings constituting a terrific arraignment of the whole régime, was dedicated to the three priests executed in 1872, in these words: "Religion, in refusing to degrade you, has placed in doubt the crime imputed to you; the government, in surrounding your case with mystery and shadow, gives reason for belief in some error, committed in fatal moments; and all the Philippines, in venerating your memory and calling you martyrs, in no way acknowledges your guilt." The only answer he ever received to this was eight Remington bullets fired into his back.

In the Ateneo he quickly attracted attention and became a general favorite by his application to his studies, the poetic fervor with which he entered into all the exercises of religious devotion, and the gentleness of his character. He was from the first considered "peculiar," for so the common mind regards everything that fails to fit the old formulas, being of a rather dreamy and reticent disposition, more inclined to reading Spanish romances than joining in the games of his schoolmates. And of all the literatures that could be placed in the hands of an imaginative child, what one would be more productive in a receptive mind of a fervid love of life and home and country and all that men hold dear, than that of the musical [xxvii]language of Castile, with its high coloring and passionate character?

His activities were varied, for, in addition to his regular studies, he demonstrated considerable skill in wood-carving and wax-modeling, and during this period won several prizes for poetical compositions in Spanish, which, while sometimes juvenile in form and following closely after Spanish models, reveal at times flashes of thought and turns of expression that show distinct originality; even in these early compositions there is that plaintive undertone, that minor chord of sadness, which pervades all his poems, reaching its fullest measure of pathos in the verses written in his death-cell. He received a bachelor's degree according to the Spanish system in 1877, but continued advanced studies in agriculture at the Ateneo, at the same time that he was pursuing the course in philosophy in the Dominican University of Santo Tomas, where in 1879 he startled the learned doctors by a reference in a prize poem to the Philippines as his "patria," fatherland. This political heresy on the part of a native of the islands was given no very serious attention at the time, being looked upon as the vagary of a

schoolboy, but again in the following year, by what seems a strange fatality, he stirred the resentment of the friars, especially the Dominicans, by winning over some of their number the first prize in a literary contest celebrated in honor of the author of *Don Quixote*.

The archaic instruction in Santo Tomas soon disgusted him and led to disagreements with the instructors, and he turned to Spain. Plans for his journey and his stay there had to be made with the utmost caution, for it would hardly have fared well with his family had it become known that the son of a tenant on an estate which was a part of the University endowment was studying in Europe. He reached Spanish territory first in Barcelona, the hotbed of radicalism, where he heard a good deal of revolutionary talk, which, however, seems to have made but little impression upon him, for throughout his entire career breadth of thought and strength of character are revealed in his consistent opposition to all forms of violence.

In Madrid he pursued the courses in medicine and philosophy, but a fact of even more consequence than his proficiency in his regular work was his persistent study of languages and his [xxviii]omnivorous reading. He was associated with the other Filipinos who were working in a somewhat spectacular way, misdirected rather than led by what may be styled the Spanish liberals, for more considerate treatment of the Philippines. But while he was among them he was not of them, as his studious habits and reticent disposition would hardly have made him a favorite among those who were enjoying the broader and gayer life there. Moreover, he soon advanced far beyond them in thought by realizing that they were beginning at the wrong end of the labor, for even at that time he seems to have caught, by what must almost be looked upon as an inspiration of genius, since there was nothing apparent in his training that would have suggested it, the realization of the fact that hope for his people lay in bettering their condition, that any real benefit must begin with the benighted folk at home, that the introduction of reforms for which they were unprepared would be useless, even dangerous to them. This was not at all the popular idea among his associates and led to serious disagreements with their leaders, for it was the way of toil and sacrifice without any of the excitement and glamour that came from drawing up magnificent plans and sending them back home with appeals for funds to carry on the propaganda—for the most part banquets and entertainments to Spain’s political leaders.

His views, as revealed in his purely political writings, may be succinctly stated, for he had that faculty of expression which never leaves any room for doubt as to the meaning. His people had a natural right to grow and to develop, and any obstacles to such growth and development were to be removed. He realized that the masses of his countrymen were sunk deep in poverty and ignorance, cringing and crouching before political authority, crawling and groveling before religious superstition, but to him this was no subject for jest or indifferent neglect—it was a serious condition which should be ameliorated, and hope lay in working into the inert social mass the leaven of conscious individual effort toward the development of a distinctive, responsible personality. He was profoundly appreciative of all the good that Spain had done, but saw in this no inconsistency with the desire that this gratitude might be given cause to be ever on the increase, thereby uniting the Philippines with the mother country by [xxix]the firm bonds of common ideas and interests, for his earlier writings breathe nothing but admiration, respect, and loyalty for Spain and her more advanced institutions. The issue was clear to him and he tried to keep it so.

It was indeed administrative myopia, induced largely by blind greed, which allowed the friar orders to confuse the objections to their repressive system with an attack upon Spanish sovereignty, thereby dragging matters from bad to worse, to engender ill feeling and finally desperation. This narrow, selfish policy had about as much soundness in it as the idea upon which it was based, so often brought forward with what looks very suspiciously like a specious effort to cover mental indolence with a glittering generality, "that the Filipino is only a grown-up child and needs a strong paternal government," an idea which entirely overlooks the natural fact that when an impressionable subject comes within the influence of a stronger force from a higher civilization he is very likely to remain a child—perhaps a stunted one—as long as he is treated as such. There is about as much sense and justice in such logic as there would be in that of keeping a babe confined in swaddling-bands and then blaming it for not knowing how to walk. No creature will remain a healthy child forever, but, as Spain learned to her bitter cost, will be very prone, as the parent grows decrepit and it begins to feel its strength, to prove a troublesome subject to handle, thereby reversing the natural law suggested by the comparison, and bringing such Sancho-Panza statecraft to flounder at last through as hopeless confusion to as absurd a conclusion as his own island government.

Rizal was not one of those rabid, self-seeking revolutionists who would merely overthrow the government and maintain the old system with themselves in the privileged places of the former rulers, nor is he to be classed among the misguided enthusiasts who by their intemperate demands and immoderate conduct merely strengthen the hands of those in power. He realized fully that the restrictions under which the people had become accustomed to order their lives should be removed gradually as they advanced under suitable guidance and became capable of adjusting themselves to the new and better conditions. They should take all the good offered, from any [xxx]source, especially that suited to their nature, which they could properly assimilate. No great patience was ever exhibited by him toward those of his countrymen—the most repulsive characters in his stories are such—who would make of themselves mere apes and mimes, decorating themselves with a veneer of questionable alien characteristics, but with no personality or stability of their own, presenting at best a spectacle to make devils laugh and angels weep, lacking even the hothouse product's virtue of being good to look upon.

Reduced to a definite form, the wish of the more thoughtful in the new generation of Filipino leaders that was growing up was that the Philippine Islands be made a province of Spain with representation in the Cortes and the concomitant freedom of expression and criticism. All that was directly asked was some substantial participation in the management of local affairs, and the curtailment of the arbitrary power of petty officials, especially of the friar curates, who constituted the chief obstacle to the education and development of the people.

The friar orders were, however, all-powerful, not only in the Philippines, but also in Madrid, where they were not chary of making use of a part of their wealth to maintain their influence. The efforts of the Filipinos in Spain, while closely watched, do not seem to have been given any very serious attention, for the Spanish authorities no doubt realized that as long as the young men stayed in Madrid writing manifestoes in a language which less than one per cent of their countrymen could read and spending their money on members of the Cortes, there could be little danger of trouble in the Philippines. Moreover, the Spanish ministers themselves appear to have been in sympathy with the more moderate wishes of the Filipinos, a fact indicated by the number of changes ordered from time to time in the

Philippine administration, but they were powerless before the strength and local influence of the religious orders. So matters dragged their weary way along until there was an unexpected and startling development, a David-Goliath contest, and certainly no one but a genius could have polished the "smooth stone" that was to smite the giant.

It is said that the idea of writing a novel depicting conditions in his native land first came to Rizal from a perusal of Eugene [xxxi]Sue's *The Wandering Jew*, while he was a student in Madrid, although the model for the greater part of it is plainly the delectable sketches in*Don Quixote*, for the author himself possessed in a remarkable degree that Cervantic touch which raises the commonplace, even the mean, into the highest regions of art. Not, however, until he had spent some time in Paris continuing his medical studies, and later in Germany, did anything definite result. But in 1887 *Noli Me Tangere* was printed in Berlin, in an establishment where the author is said to have worked part of his time as a compositor in order to defray his expenses while he continued his studies. A limited edition was published through the financial aid extended by a Filipino associate, and sent to Hongkong, thence to be surreptitiously introduced into the Philippines.
Noli Me Tangere ("Touch Me Not") at the time the work was written had a peculiar fitness as a title. Not only was there an apt suggestion of a comparison with the common flower of that name, but the term is also applied in pathology to a malignant cancer which affects every bone and tissue in the body, and that this latter was in the author's mind would appear from the dedication and from the summing-up of the Philippine situation in the final conversation between Ibarra and Elias. But in a letter written to a friend in Paris at the time, the author himself says that it was taken from the Gospel scene where the risen Savior appears to the Magdalene, to whom He addresses these words, a scene that has been the subject of several notable paintings.

In this connection it is interesting to note what he himself thought of the work, and his frank statement of what he had tried to accomplish, made just as he was publishing it: "*Noli Me Tangere*, an expression taken from the Gospel of St. Luke,7 means *touch me not*. The book contains things of which no one up to the present time has spoken, for they are so sensitive that they have never suffered themselves to be touched by any one whomsoever. For my own part, I have attempted to do what no one else has

been willing to do: I have dared to answer the calumnies that have for centuries been heaped upon us and our country. I have written of the social condition and the life, [xxxii]of our beliefs, our hopes, our longings, our complaints, and our sorrows; I have unmasked the hypocrisy which, under the cloak of religion, has come among us to impoverish and to brutalize us, I have distinguished the true religion from the false, from the superstition that traffics with the holy word to get money and to make us believe in absurdities for which Catholicism would blush, if ever it knew of them. I have unveiled that which has been hidden behind the deceptive and dazzling words of our governments. I have told our countrymen of our mistakes, our vices, our faults, and our weak complaisance with our miseries there. Where I have found virtue I have spoken of it highly in order to render it homage; and if I have not wept in speaking of our misfortunes, I have laughed over them, for no one would wish to weep with me over our woes, and laughter is ever the best means of concealing sorrow. The deeds that I have related are true and have actually occurred; I can furnish proof of this. My book may have (and it does have) defects from an artistic and esthetic point of view—this I do not deny—but no one can dispute the veracity of the facts presented."[8]

But while the primary purpose and first effect of the work was to crystallize anti-friar sentiment, the author has risen above a mere personal attack, which would give it only a temporary value, and by portraying in so clear and sympathetic a way the life of his people has produced a piece of real literature, of especial interest now as they are being swept into the newer day. Any fool can point out errors and defects, if they are at all apparent, and the persistent searching them out for their own sake is the surest mark of the vulpine mind, but the author has east aside all such petty considerations and, whether consciously or not, has left a work of permanent value to his own people and of interest to all friends of humanity. If ever a fair land has been cursed with the wearisome breed of fault-finders, both indigenous and exotic, that land is the Philippines, so it is indeed refreshing to turn from the dreary waste of carping criticisms, pragmatical "scientific" analyses, and sneering half-truths to a story pulsating with life, presenting [xxxiii]the Filipino as a human being, with his virtues and his vices, his loves and hates, his hopes and fears.

The publication of *Noli Me Tangere* suggests the reflection that the story of Achilles' heel is a myth only in form. The belief that any institution,

system, organization, or arrangement has reached an absolute form is about as far as human folly can go. The friar orders looked upon themselves as the sum of human achievement in man-driving and God-persuading, divinely appointed to rule, fixed in their power, far above suspicion. Yet they were obsessed by the sensitive, covert dread of exposure that ever lurks spectrally under pharisaism's specious robe, so when there appeared this work of a "miserable Indian," who dared to portray them and the conditions that their control produced exactly as they were—for the indefinable touch by which the author gives an air of unimpeachable veracity to his story is perhaps its greatest artistic merit—the effect upon the mercurial Spanish temperament was, to say the least, electric. The very audacity of the thing left the friars breathless.

A committee of learned doctors from Santo Tomas, who were appointed to examine the work, unmercifully scored it as attacking everything from the state religion to the integrity of the Spanish dominions, so the circulation of it in the Philippines was, of course, strictly prohibited, which naturally made the demand for it greater. Large sums were paid for single copies, of which, it might be remarked in passing, the author himself received scarcely any part; collections have ever had a curious habit of going astray in the Philippines.

Although the possession of a copy by a Filipino usually meant summary imprisonment or deportation, often with the concomitant confiscation of property for the benefit of some "patriot," the book was widely read among the leading families and had the desired effect of crystallizing the sentiment against the friars, thus to pave the way for concerted action. At last the idol had been flouted, so all could attack it. Within a year after it had begun to circulate in the Philippines a memorial was presented to the Archbishop by quite a respectable part of the Filipinos in Manila, requesting that the friar orders be expelled from the country, but this resulted only in the deportation of every signer of the petition upon whom the [xxxiv]government could lay hands. They were scattered literally to the four corners of the earth: some to the Ladrone Islands, some to Fernando Po off the west coast of Africa, some to Spanish prisons, others to remote parts of the Philippines.

Meanwhile, the author had returned to the Philippines for a visit to his family, during which time he was constantly attended by an officer of the Civil Guard, detailed ostensibly as a body-guard. All his movements were

closely watched, and after a few months the Captain-General "advised" him to leave the country, at the same time requesting a copy of *Noli Me Tangere*, saying that the excerpts submitted to him by the censor had awakened a desire to read the entire work. Rizal returned to Europe by way of Japan and the United States, which did not seem to make any distinct impression upon him, although it was only a little later that he predicted that when Spain lost control of the Philippines, an eventuality he seemed to consider certain not far in the future, the United States would be a probable successor.[9]

Returning to Europe, he spent some time in London preparing an edition of Morga's *Sucesos de las Filipinas*, a work published in Mexico about 1606 by the principal actor in some of the most stirring scenes of the formative period of the Philippine government. It is a record of prime importance in Philippine history, and the resuscitation of it was no small service to the country. Rizal added notes tending to show that the Filipinos had been possessed of considerable culture and civilization before the Spanish conquest, and he even intimated that they had retrograded rather than advanced under Spanish tutelage. But such an extreme view must be ascribed to patriotic ardor, for Rizal himself, though possessed of that intangible quality commonly known as genius and partly trained in northern Europe, is still in his own personality the strongest refutation of such a contention.

Later, in Ghent, he published *El Filibusterismo*, called by him a continuation of *Noli Me Tangere*, but with which it really has no more connection than that some of the characters [xxxv]reappear and are disposed of.[10] There is almost no connected plot in it and hardly any action, but there is the same incisive character-drawing and clear etching of conditions that characterize the earlier work. It is a maturer effort and a more forceful political argument, hence it lacks the charm and simplicity which assign *Noli Me Tangere* to a preeminent place in Philippine literature. The light satire of the earlier work is replaced by bitter sarcasm delivered with deliberate intent, for the iron had evidently entered his soul with broadening experience and the realization that justice at the hands of decadent Spain had been an iridescent dream of his youth. Nor had the Spanish authorities in the Philippines been idle; his relatives had been subjected to all the annoyances and irritations of petty persecution, eventually losing the greater part of their property, while some of them suffered deportation.

In 1891 he returned to Hongkong to practise medicine, in which profession he had remarkable success, even coming to be looked upon as a wizard by his simple countrymen, among whom circulated wonderful accounts of his magical powers. He was especially skilled in ophthalmology, and his first operation after returning from his studies in Europe was to restore his mother's sight by removing a cataract from one of her eyes, an achievement which no doubt formed the basis of marvelous tales. But the misfortunes of his people were ever the paramount consideration, so he wrote to the Captain-General requesting permission to remove his numerous relatives to Borneo to establish a colony there, for which purpose liberal concessions had been offered him by the British government. The request was denied, and further stigmatized as an "unpatriotic" attempt to lessen the population of the Philippines, when labor was already scarce. This was the answer he received to a reasonable petition after the homes of his family, including his own birthplace, had been ruthlessly destroyed by military force, while a quarrel over ownership and rents was still pending in the courts. The Captain-General at the time was Valeriano Weyler, the pitiless instrument of the reactionary forces manipulated by the monastic orders, he who [xxxvi]was later sent to Cuba to introduce there the repressive measures which had apparently been so efficacious in the Philippines, thus to bring on the interference of the United States to end Spain's colonial power—all of which induces the reflection that there may still be deluded casuists who doubt the reality of Nemesis.

Weyler was succeeded by Eulogio Despujols, who made sincere attempts to reform the administration, and was quite popular with the Filipinos. In reply to repeated requests from Rizal to be permitted to return to the Philippines unmolested a passport was finally granted to him and he set out for Manila. For this move on his part, in addition to the natural desire to be among his own people, two special reasons appear: he wished to investigate and stop if possible the unwarranted use of his name in taking up collections that always remained mysteriously unaccounted for, and he was drawn by a ruse deliberately planned and executed in that his mother was several times officiously arrested and hustled about as a common criminal in order to work upon the son's filial feelings and thus get him back within reach of the Spanish authority, which, as subsequent events and later researches have shown, was the real intention in issuing the passport. Entirely unsuspecting any ulterior motive, however, in a few days after his arrival he convoked a

motley gathering of Filipinos of all grades of the population, for he seems to have been only slightly acquainted among his own people and not at all versed in the mazy Walpurgis dance of Philippine politics, and laid before it the constitution for a *Liga Filipina* (Philippine League), an organization looking toward greater unity among the Filipinos and coöperation for economic progress. This *Liga* was no doubt the result of his observations in England and Germany, and, despite its questionable form as a secret society for political and economic purposes, was assuredly a step in the right direction, but unfortunately its significance was beyond the comprehension of his countrymen, most of whom saw in it only an opportunity for harassing the Spanish government, for which all were ready enough.

All his movements were closely watched, and a few days after his return he was arrested on the charge of having seditious literature in his baggage. The friars were already [xxxvii]clamoring for his blood, but Despujols seems to have been more in sympathy with Rizal than with the men whose tool he found himself forced to be. Without trial Rizal was ordered deported to Dapitan, a small settlement on the northern coast of Mindanao. The decree ordering this deportation and the destruction of all copies of his books to be found in the Philippines is a marvel of sophistry, since, in the words of a Spanish writer of the time, "in this document we do not know which to wonder at most: the ingenuousness of the Governor-General, for in this decree he implicitly acknowledges his weakness and proneness to error, or the candor of Rizal, who believed that all the way was strewn with roses."[11] But it is quite evident that Despujols was playing a double game, of which he seems to have been rather ashamed, for he gave strict orders that copies of the decree should be withheld from Rizal.

In Dapitan Rizal gave himself up to his studies and such medical practice as sought him out in that remote spot, for the fame of his skill was widely extended, and he was allowed to live unmolested under parole that he would make no attempt to escape. In company with a Jesuit missionary he gathered about him a number of native boys and conducted a practical school on the German plan, at the same time indulging in religious polemics with his Jesuit acquaintances by correspondence and working fitfully on some compositions which were never completed, noteworthy among them being a study in English of the Tagalog verb.

But while he was living thus quietly in Dapitan, events that were to determine his fate were misshaping themselves in Manila. The stone had been loosened on the mountain-side and was bounding on in mad career, far beyond his control.[xxxviii]

III

He who of old would rend the oak,
Dream'd not of the rebound;
Chain'd by the trunk he vainly broke
Alone—how look'd he round?
BYRON.

Reason and moderation in the person of Rizal scorned and banished, the spirit of Jean Paul Marat and John Brown of Ossawatomie rises to the fore in the shape of one Andres Bonifacio, warehouse porter, who sits up o' nights copying all the letters and documents that he can lay hands on; composing grandiloquent manifestoes in Tagalog; drawing up magnificent appointments in the names of prominent persons who would later suffer even to the shedding of their life's blood through his mania for writing history in advance; spelling out Spanish tales of the French Revolution; babbling of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity; hinting darkly to his confidants that the President of France had begun life as a blacksmith. Only a few days after Rizal was so summarily hustled away, Bonifacio gathered together a crowd of malcontents and ignorant dupes, some of them composing as choice a gang of cutthroats as ever slit the gullet of a Chinese or tied mutilated prisoners in ant hills, and solemnly organized the *Kataastaasang Kagalang-galang Katipunan nğ mga Anak nğ Bayan*, "Supreme Select Association of the Sons of the People," for the extermination of the ruling race and the restoration of the Golden Age. It was to bring the people into concerted action for a general revolt on a fixed date, when they would rise simultaneously, take possession of the city of Manila, and—the rest were better left to the imagination, for they had been reared under the Spanish colonial system and imitativeness has ever been pointed out as a cardinal trait in the Filipino character. No quarter was to be asked or given, and the most sacred ties, even [xxxix]of consanguinity, were to be disregarded in the general slaughter. To the inquiry of a curious neophyte as to how the Spaniards were to be distinguished from the other Europeans, in order to avoid international complications, dark Andres replied that in case of doubt they should proceed with due caution but

should take good care that they made no mistakes about letting any of the *Castilas* escape their vengeance. The higher officials of the government were to be taken alive as hostages, while the friars were to be reserved for a special holocaust on Bagumbayan Field, where over their incinerated remains a heaven-kissing monument would be erected.

This Katipunan seems to have been an outgrowth from Spanish freemasonry, introduced into the Philippines by a Spaniard named Morayta and Marcelo H. del Pilar, a native of Bulacan Province who was the practical leader of the Filipinos in Spain, but who died there in 1896 just as he was setting out for Hongkong to mature his plans for a general uprising to expel the friar orders. There had been some masonic societies in the islands for some time, but the membership had been limited to Peninsulars, and they played no part in the politics of the time. But about 1888 Filipinos began to be admitted into some of them, and later, chiefly through the exertions of Pilar, lodges exclusively for them were instituted. These soon began to display great activity, especially in the transcendental matter of collections, so that their existence became a source of care to the government and a nightmare to the religious orders. From them, and with a perversion of the idea in Rizal's still-born *Liga*, it was an easy transition to the Katipunan, which was to put aside all pretense of reconciliation with Spain, and at the appointed time rise to exterminate not only the friars but also all the Spaniards and Spanish sympathizers, thus to bring about the reign of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity, under the benign guidance of Patriot Bonifacio, with his bolo for a scepter.

With its secrecy and mystic forms, its methods of threats and intimidation, the Katipunan spread rapidly, especially among the Tagalogs, the most intransigent of the native peoples, and, it should be noted, the ones in Whose territory the friars were the principal landlords. It was organized on the triangle plan, so that no member might know or communicate with more [xl]than three others—the one above him from whom he received his information and instructions and two below to whom he transmitted them. The initiations were conducted with great secrecy and solemnity, calculated to inspire the new members with awe and fear. The initiate, after a series of blood-curdling ordeals to try out his courage and resolution, swore on a human skull a terrific oath to devote his life and energies to the extermination of the white race, regardless of age or sex, and later affixed to

it his signature or mark, usually the latter, with his own blood taken from an incision in the left arm or left breast. This was one form of the famous "blood compact," which, if history reads aright, played so important a part in the assumption of sovereignty over the Philippines by Legazpi in the name of Philip II.

Rizal was made the honorary president of the association, his portrait hung in all the meeting-halls, and the magic of his name used to attract the easily deluded masses, who were in a state of agitated ignorance and growing unrest, ripe for any movement that looked anti-governmental, and especially anti-Spanish. Soon after the organization had been perfected, collections began to be taken up—those collections were never overlooked—for the purpose of chartering a steamer to rescue him from Dapitan and transport him to Singapore, whence he might direct the general uprising, the day and the hour for which were fixed by Bonifacio for August twenty-sixth, 1896, at six o'clock sharp in the evening, since lack of precision in his magnificent programs was never a fault of that bold patriot, his logic being as severe as that of the Filipino policeman who put the flag at half-mast on Good Friday.

Of all this Rizal himself was, of course, entirely ignorant, until in May, 1896, a Filipino doctor named Pio Valenzuela, a creature of Bonifacio's, was despatched to Dapitan, taking along a blind man as a pretext for the visit to the famous oculist, to lay the plans before him for his consent and approval. Rizal expostulated with Valenzuela for a time over such a mad and hopeless venture, which would only bring ruin and misery upon the masses, and then is said to have very humanly lost his patience, ending the interview "in so bad a humor and with words so offensive that the deponent, who had gone with the intention of remaining there a month, took the steamer [xli]on the following day, for return to Manila."[12] He reported secretly to Bonifacio, who bestowed several choice Tagalog epithets on Rizal, and charged his envoy to say nothing about the failure of his mission, but rather to give the impression that he had been successful. Rizal's name continued to be used as the shibboleth of the insurrection, and the masses were made to believe that he would appear as their leader at the appointed hour.

Vague reports from police officers, to the effect that something unusual in the nature of secret societies was going on among the people, began to

reach the government, but no great attention was paid to them, until the evening of August nineteenth, when the parish priest of Tondo was informed by the mother-superior of one of the convent-schools that she had just learned of a plot to massacre all the Spaniards. She had the information from a devoted pupil, whose brother was a compositor in the office of the *Diario de Manila*. As is so frequently the case in Filipino families, this elder sister was the purse-holder, and the brother's insistent requests for money, which was needed by him to meet the repeated assessments made on the members as the critical hour approached, awakened her curiosity and suspicion to such an extent that she forced him to confide the whole plan to her. Without delay she divulged it to her patroness, who in turn notified the curate of Tondo, where the printing-office was located. The priest called in two officers of the Civil Guard, who arrested the young printer, frightened a confession out of him, and that night, in company with the friar, searched the printing-office, finding secreted there several lithographic plates for printing receipts and certificates of membership in the Katipunan, with a number of documents giving some account of the plot.

Then the Spanish population went wild. General Ramon Blanco was governor and seems to have been about the only person who kept his head at all. He tried to prevent giving so irresponsible a movement a fictitious importance, but was utterly powerless to stay the clamor for blood which at once arose, loudest on the part of those alleged ministers of the gentle Christ. The gates of the old Walled City, long fallen [xlii]into disuse, were cleaned and put in order, martial law was declared, and wholesale arrests made. Many of the prisoners were confined in Fort Santiago, one batch being crowded into a dungeon for which the only ventilation was a grated opening at the top, and one night a sergeant of the guard carelessly spread his sleeping-mat over this, so the next morning some fifty-five asphyxiated corpses were hauled away. On the twenty-sixth armed insurrection broke out at Caloocan, just north of Manila, from time immemorial the resort of bad characters from all the country round and the center of brigandage, while at San Juan del Monte, on the outskirts of the city, several bloody skirmishes were fought a few days later with the *Guardia Civil Veterana*, the picked police force.

Bonifacio had been warned of the discovery of his schemes in time to make his escape and flee to the barrio, or village, of Balintawak, a few miles

north of Manila, thence to lead the attack on Caloocan and inaugurate the reign of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity in the manner in which Philippine insurrections have generally had a habit of starting—with the murder of Chinese merchants and the pillage of their shops. He had from the first reserved for himself the important office of treasurer in the Katipunan, in addition to being on occasions president and at all times its ruling spirit, so he now established himself as dictator and proceeded to appoint a magnificent staff, most of whom contrived to escape as soon as they were out of reach of his bolo. Yet he drew considerable numbers about him, for this man, though almost entirely unlettered, seems to have been quite a personality among his own people, especially possessed of that gift of oratory in his native tongue to which the Malay is so preeminently susceptible.

In Manila a special tribunal was constituted and worked steadily, sometimes through the siesta-hour, for there were times, of which this was one, when even Spanish justice could be swift. Bagumbayan began to be a veritable field of blood, as the old methods of repression were resorted to for the purpose of striking terror into the native population by wholesale executions, nor did the ruling powers realize that the time for such methods had passed. It was a case of sixteenth-century colonial methods fallen into fretful and frantic senility, so in all this wretched business it is doubtful whim to [xliii]pity the more: the blind stupidity of the fossilized conservatives incontinently throwing an empire away, forfeiting their influence over a people whom they, by temperament and experience, should have been fitted to control and govern; or the potential cruelty of perverted human nature in the dark Frankenstein who would wreak upon the rulers in their decadent days the most hideous of the methods in the system that produced him, as he planned his festive holocaust and carmagnole on the spot where every spark of initiative and leadership among his people, both good and bad, had been summarily and ruthlessly extinguished. There is at least a world of reflection in it for the rulers of men.

In the meantime Rizal, wearying of the quiet life in Dapitan and doubtless foreseeing the impending catastrophe, had requested leave to volunteer his services as a physician in the military hospitals of Cuba, of the horrors and sufferings in which he had heard. General Blanco at once gladly acceded to this request and had him brought to Manila, but unfortunately the boat

carrying him arrived there a day too late for him to catch the regular August mail-steamer to Spain, so he was kept in the cruiser a prisoner of war, awaiting the next transportation. While he was thus detained, the Katipunan plot was discovered and the rebellion broke out. He was accused of being the head of it, but Blanco gave him a personal letter completely exonerating him from any complicity in the outbreak, as well as a letter of recommendation to the Spanish minister of war. He was placed on the *Isla de Panay* when it left for Spain on September third and traveled at first as a passenger. At Singapore he was advised to land and claim British protection, as did some of his fellow travelers, but he refused to do so, saying that his conscience was clear.

As the name of Rizal had constantly recurred during the trials of the Katipunan suspects, the military tribunal finally issued a formal demand for him. The order of arrest was cabled to Port Said and Rizal there placed in solitary confinement for the remainder of the voyage. Arrived at Barcelona, he was confined in the grim fortress of Montjuich, where; by a curious coincidence, the governor was the same Despujols who had issued the decree of banishment in 1892. Shortly afterwards, he was placed on the transport *Colon*, which was [xliv]bound for the Philippines with troops, Blanco having at last been stirred to action. Strenuous efforts were now made by Rizal's friends in London to have him removed from the ship at Singapore, but the British authorities declined to take any action, on the ground that he was on a Spanish warship and therefore beyond the jurisdiction of their courts. The *Colon* arrived at Manila on November third and Rizal was imprisoned in Fort Santiago, while a special tribunal was constituted to try him on the charges of carrying on anti-patriotic and anti-religious propaganda, rebellion, sedition, and the formation of illegal associations. Some other charges may have been overlooked in the hurry and excitement.

It would be almost a travesty to call a trial the proceedings which began early in December and dragged along until the twenty-sixth. Rizal was defended by a young Spanish officer selected by him from among a number designated by the tribunal, who chivalrously performed so unpopular a duty as well as he could. But the whole affair was a mockery of justice, for the Spanish government in the Philippines had finally and hopelessly reached the condition graphically pictured by Mr. Kipling:

Panic that shells the drifting spar—
Loud waste with none to check—
Mad fear that rakes a scornful star
Or sweeps a consort's deck!

The clamor against Blanco had resulted in his summary removal by royal decree and the appointment of a real "pacificator," Camilo Polavieja.

While in prison Rizal prepared an address to those of his countrymen who were in armed rebellion, repudiating the use of his name and deprecating the resort to violence. The closing words are a compendium of his life and beliefs: "Countrymen: I have given proofs, as well as the best of you, of desiring liberty for our country, and I continue to desire it. But I place as a premise the education of the people, so that by means of instruction and work they may have a personality of their own and that they may make themselves worthy of that same liberty. In my writings I have recommended the study of the civic virtues, without which there can be no redemption. I have also written (and my words have been repeated) that [xlv]reforms, to be fruitful, must come from *above*, that those which spring from*below* are uncertain and insecure movements. Imbued with these ideas, I cannot do less than condemn, and I do condemn, this absurd, savage rebellion, planned behind my back, which dishonors the Filipinos and discredits those who can speak for us. I abominate all criminal actions and refuse any kind of participation in them, pitying with all my heart the dupes who have allowed themselves to be deceived. Go back, then, to your homes, and may God forgive those who have acted in bad faith." This address, however, was not published by the Spanish authorities, since they did not consider it "patriotic" enough; instead, they killed the writer!

Rizal appeared before the tribunal bound, closely guarded by two Peninsular soldiers, but maintained his serenity throughout and answered the charges in a straightforward way. He pointed out the fact that he had never taken any great part in politics, having even quarreled with Marcelo del Pilar, the active leader of the anti-clericals, by reason of those perennial "subscriptions," and that during the time he was accused of being the instigator and organizer of armed rebellion he had been a close prisoner in Dapitan under strict surveillance by both the military and ecclesiastical authorities. The prosecutor presented a lengthy document, which ran mostly to words, about the only definite conclusion laid down in it being that the

Philippines “are, and always must remain, Spanish territory.” What there may have been in Rizal’s career to hang such a conclusion upon is not quite dear, but at any rate this learned legal light was evidently still thinking in colors on the map serenely unconscious in his European pseudo-prescience of the new and wonderful development in the Western Hemisphere—humanity militant, Lincolnism.

The death sentence was asked, but the longer the case dragged on the more favorable it began to look for the accused, so the president of the tribunal, after deciding, Jeffreys-like, that the charges had been proved, ordered that no further evidence be taken. Rizal betrayed some sunrise when his doom was thus foreshadowed, for, dreamer that he was, he seems not to have anticipated such a fatal eventuality for himself. He did not lose his serenity, however, even when the tribunal promptly brought in a verdict of guilty and imposed the death sentence, [xlvi]upon which Polavieja the next day placed his *Cúmplase*, fixing the morning of December thirtieth for the execution.
So Rizal’s fate was sealed. The witnesses against him, in so far as there was any substantial testimony at all, had been his own countrymen, coerced or cajoled into making statements which they have since repudiated as false, and which in some cases were extorted from them by threats and even torture. But he betrayed very little emotion, even maintaining what must have been an assumed cheerfulness. Only one reproach is recorded: that he had been made a dupe of, that he had been deceived by every one, even the *bankeros* and *cocheros*. His old Jesuit instructors remained with him in the *capilla*, or death-cell,13 and largely through the influence of an image of the Sacred Heart, which he had carved as a schoolboy, it is claimed that a reconciliation with the Church was effected. There has been considerable pragmatical discussion as to what form of retraction from him was necessary, since he had been, after studying in Europe, a frank freethinker, but such futile polemics may safely be left to the learned doctors. That he was reconciled with the Church would seem to be evidenced by the fact that just before the execution he gave legal status as his wife to the woman, a rather remarkable Eurasian adventuress, who had lived with him in Dapitan, and the religious ceremony was the only one then recognized in the islands.14 The greater part of his last night on earth was [xlvii]spent in composing a chain of verse; no very majestic flight of poesy, but a pathetic

monody throbbing with patient resignation and inextinguishable hope, one of the sweetest, saddest swan-songs ever sung.

Thus he was left at the last, entirely alone. As soon as his doom became certain the Patriots had all scurried to cover, one gentle poetaster even rushing into doggerel verse to condemn him as a reversion to barbarism; the wealthier suspects betook themselves to other lands or made judicious use of their money-bags among the Spanish officials; the better classes of the population floundered hopelessly, leaderless, in the confused whirl of opinions and passions; while the voiceless millions for whom he had spoken moved on in dumb, uncomprehending silence. He had lived in that higher dreamland of the future, ahead of his countrymen, ahead even of those who assumed to be the mentors of his people, and he must learn, as does every noble soul that labors "to make the bounds of freedom wider yet," the bitter lesson that nine-tenths, if not all, the woes that afflict humanity spring from man's own stupid selfishness, that the wresting of the scepter from the tyrant is often the least of the task, that the bondman comes to love his bonds—like Chillon's prisoner, his very chains and he grow friends,—but that the struggle for human freedom must go on, at whatever cost, in ever-widening circles, "wave after wave, each mightier than the last," for as long as one body toils in fetters or one mind welters in blind ignorance, either of the slave's base delusion or the despot's specious illusion, there can be no final security for any free man, or his children, or his children's children.[xlviii]

IV

"God save thee, ancient Mariner!
From the fiends, that plague thee thus!
Why look'st thou so?"—"With my cross-bow
I shot the Albatross!"
COLERIDGE.

It was one of those magic December mornings of the tropics—the very nuptials of earth and sky, when great Nature seems to fling herself incontinently into creation, wrapping the world in a brooding calm of light and color, that Spain chose for committing political suicide in the Philippines. Bagumbayan Field was crowded with troops, both regulars and militia, for every man capable of being trusted with arms was drawn up there, excepting only the necessary guards in other parts of the city. Extra patrols were in the streets, double guards were placed over the

archiepiscopal and gubernatorial palaces. The calmest man in all Manila that day was he who must stand before the firing-squad.

Two special and unusual features are to be noted about this execution. All the principal actors were Filipinos: the commander of the troops and the officer directly in charge of the execution were native-born, while the firing-squad itself was drawn from a local native regiment, though it is true that on this occasion a squad of Peninsular *cazadores*, armed with loaded Mausers, stood directly behind them to see that they failed not in their duty. Again, there was but one victim; for it seems to have ever been the custom of the Spanish rulers to associate in these gruesome affairs some real criminals with the political offenders, no doubt with the intentional purpose of confusing the issue in the general mind. Rizal standing alone, the occasion of so much hurried preparation and fearful precaution, is a pathetic testimonial to the degree of incapacity into which the ruling powers had fallen, even in chicanery.

After bidding good-by to his sister and making final disposition [xlix]regarding some personal property, the doomed man, under close guard, walked calmly, even cheerfully, from Fort Santiago along the Malecon to the Luneta, accompanied by his Jesuit confessors. Arrived there, he thanked those about him for their kindness and requested the officer in charge to allow him to face the firing-squad, since he had never been a traitor to Spain. This the officer declined to permit, for the order was to shoot him in the back. Rizal assented with a slight protest, pointed out to the soldiers the spot in his back at which they should aim, and with a firm step took his place in front of them.

Then occurred an act almost too hideous to record. There he stood, expecting a volley of Remington bullets in his back—Time was, and Life's stream ebbed to Eternity's flood—when the military surgeon stepped forward and asked if he might feel his pulse! Rizal extended his left hand, and the officer remarked that he could not understand how a man's pulse could beat normally at such a terrific moment! The victim shrugged his shoulders and let the hand fall again to his side—Latin refinement could be no further refined!

A moment later there he lay, on his right side, his life-blood spurting over the Luneta curb, eyes wide open, fixedly staring at that Heaven where the

priests had taught all those centuries agone that Justice abides. The troops filed past the body, for the most part silently, while desultory cries of "*Viva España!*" from among the "patriotic" Filipino volunteers were summarily hushed by a Spanish artillery-officer's stern rebuke: "Silence, you rabble!" To drown out the fitful cheers and the audible murmurs, the bands struck up Spanish national airs. Stranger death-dirge no man and system ever had. Carnival revelers now dance about the scene and Filipino schoolboys play baseball over that same spot.

A few days later another execution was held on that spot, of members of the *Liga*, some of them characters that would have richly deserved shooting at any place or time, according to existing standards, but notable among them there knelt, torture-crazed, as to his orisons, Francisco Roxas, millionaire capitalist, who may be regarded as the social and economic head of the Filipino people, as Rizal was fitted to be their intellectual leader. Shades of Anda and Vargas! Out there [l]at Balintawak—rather fitly, "the home of the snake-demon,"—not three hours' march from this same spot, on the very edge of the city, Andres Bonifacio and his literally sansculottic gangs of cutthroats were, almost with impunity, soiling the fair name of Freedom with murder and mutilation, rape and rapine, awakening the worst passions of an excitable, impulsive people, destroying that essential respect for law and order, which to restore would take a holocaust of fire and blood, with a generation of severe training. Unquestionably did Rizal demonstrate himself to be a seer and prophet when he applied to such a system the story of Babylon and the fateful handwriting on the wall!

But forces had been loosed that would not be so suppressed, the time had gone by when such wild methods of repression would serve. The destruction of the native leaders, culminating in the executions of Rizal and Roxas, produced a counter-effect by rousing the Tagalogs, good and bad alike, to desperate fury, and the aftermath was frightful. The better classes were driven to take part in the rebellion, and Cavite especially became a veritable slaughter-pen, as the contest settled down into a hideous struggle for mutual extermination. Dark Andres went his wild way to perish by the violence he had himself invoked, a prey to the rising ambition of a young leader of considerable culture and ability, a schoolmaster named Emilio Aguinaldo. His Katipunan hovered fitfully around Manila, for a time even drawing to itself in their desperation some of the better elements of the

population, only to find itself sold out and deserted by its leaders, dying away for a time; but later, under changed conditions, it reappeared in strange metamorphosis as the rallying-center for the largest number of Filipinos who have ever gathered together for a common purpose, and then finally went down before those thin grim lines in khaki with sharp and sharpest shot clearing away the wreck of the old, blazing the way for the new: the broadening sweep of "Democracy announcing, in rifle-volleys death-winged, under her Star Banner, to the tune of Yankee-doodle-do, that she is born, and, whirlwind-like, will envelop the whole world!"

MANILA, December 1, 1909[li]

1Quoted by Macaulay: *Essay on the Succession in Spain*.

2The ruins of the *Fuerza de Playa Honda, ó Real de Paynavén*, are still to be seen in the present municipality of Botolan, Zambales. The walls are overgrown with rank vegetation, but are well preserved, [viiin]with the exception of a portion looking toward the Bankal River, which has been undermined by the currents and has fallen intact into the stream.

3*Relation of the Zambals*, by Domingo Perez, O.P.; manuscript dated 1680. The excerpts are taken from the translation in Blair and Robertson, *The Philippine Islands*, Vol. XLVII, by courtesy of the Arthur H. Clark Company, Cleveland, Ohio.

4*"Estadismo de las Islas Filipinas, ó Mis Viages por Este Pais*, por Fray Joaquin Martinez de Zuñiga, Agustino calzado." Padre Zuñiga was a parish priest in several towns and later Provincial of his Order. He wrote a history of the conquest, and in 1800 accompanied Alava, the *General de Marina*, on his tours of investigation looking toward preparations for the defense of the islands against another attack of the British, with whom war threatened. The *Estadismo*, which is a record of these journeys, with some account of the rest of the islands, remained in manuscript until 1893, when it was published in Madrid.

5Secular, as distinguished from the regulars, i.e., members of the monastic orders.

6Sinibaldo de Mas, *Informe sobre el estado de las Islas Filipinas en 1842*, translated in Blair and Robertson's *The Philippine Islands*, Vol. XXVIII, p. 254.

7*Sic*. St. John xx, 17.

8This letter in the original French in which it was written is reproduced in the *Vida y Escritos del Dr. José Rizal*, by W. E. Retana (Madrid, 1907).

9*Filipinas dentro de Cien Años*, published in the organ of the Filipinos in Spain, *La Solidaridad*, in 1889–90. This is the most studied of Rizal's purely political writings, and the completest exposition of his views concerning the Philippines.

10An English version of *El Filibusterismo*, under the title *The Reign of Greed*, has been prepared to accompany the present work.

11"Que todo el monte era orégano." W.E. Retana, in the appendix to Fray Martinez de Zuñiga's *Estadismo*, Madrid, 1893, where the decree is quoted. The rest of this comment of Retana's deserves quotation as an estimate of the living man by a Spanish publicist who was at the time in the

employ of the friars and contemptuously hostile to Rizal, but who has since 1898 been giving quite a spectacular demonstration of waving a red light after the wreck, having become his most enthusiastic, almost hysterical, biographer: "Rizal is what is commonly called a character, but he has repeatedly demonstrated very great inexperience in the affairs of life. I believe him to be now about thirty-two years old. He is the Indian of most ability among those who have written."

12From Valenzuela's deposition before the military tribunal, September sixth, 1896.

13*Capilla*: the Spanish practise is to place a condemned person for the twenty-four hours preceding his execution in a *chapel*, or a cell fitted up as such, where he may devote himself to religious exercises and receive the final ministrations of the Church.

14But even this conclusion is open to doubt: there is no proof beyond the unsupported statement of the Jesuits that he made a written retraction, which was later destroyed, though why a document so interesting, and so important in support of their own point of view, should not have been preserved furnishes an illuminating commentary on the whole confused affair. The only unofficial witness present was the condemned man's sister, and her declaration, that she was at the time in such a state of excitement and distress that she is unable to affirm positively that there was a real marriage ceremony performed, can readily be accepted. It must be remembered that the Jesuits were themselves under the official and popular ban for the part they had played in Rizal's education and development and that they were seeking to set themselves right in order to maintain their prestige. Add to this the persistent and systematic effort made to destroy every scrap [xlviin]of record relating to the man—the sole gleam of shame evidenced in the impolitic, idiotic, and pusillanimous treatment of him—and the whole question becomes such a puzzle that it may just as well be left in darkness, with a throb of pity for the unfortunate victim caught in such a maelstrom of panic-stricken passion and selfish intrigue.

[Contents]

> What? Does no Caesar, does no Achilles, appear on your stage now?
>
> Not an Andromache e'en, not an Orestes, my friend? No! there is nought to be seen there but parsons, and syndics of commerce,
>
> Secretaries perchance, ensigns and majors of horse. But, my good friend, pray tell, what can such people e'er meet with
>
> That can be truly call'd great?—what that is great can they do?

SCHILLER: *Shakespeare's Ghost*.

(*Bowring's translation.*)[liii]

[Contents]

Contents

	Author’s Dedication
I	A Social Gathering
II	Crisostomo Ibarra
III	The Dinner
IV	Heretic and Filibuster
V	A Star in a Dark Night
VI	Capitan Tiago
VII	An Idyl on an Azotea
VIII	Recollections
IX	Local Affairs
X	The Town
XI	The Rulers
XII	All Saints
XIII	Signs of Storm
XIV	Tasio: Lunatic or Sage
IV	The Sacristans
XVI	Sisa
XVII	Basilio
XVIII	Souls In Torment
XIX	A Schoolmaster’s Difficulties
XX	The Meeting in the Town Hall
XXI	The Story of a Mother[liv]
XXII	Lights and Shadows
XXIII	Fishing

XXIV	In the Wood
XXV	In the House of the Sage
XXVI	The Eve of the Fiesta
XXVII	In the Twilight
XXVIII	Correspondence
XXIX	The Morning
XXX	In the Church
XXXI	The Sermon
XXXII	The Derrick
XXXIII	Free Thought
XXXIV	The Dinner
XXXV	Comments
XXXVI	The First Cloud
XXXVII	His Excellency
XXXVIII	The Procession
XXXIX	Doña Consolación
XL	Right and Might
XLI	Two Visits
XLII	The Espadañas
XLIII	Plans
XLIV	An Examination of Conscience
XLV	The Hunted
XLVI	The Cockpit
XLVII	The Two Señoras
XLVIII	The Enigma
XLIX	The Voice of the Hunted[iv]

L	Elias’s Story
LI	Exchanges
LII	The Cards of the Dead and the Shadows
LIII	Il Buon Dí Si Conosce Da Mattina
LIV	Revelations
LV	The Catastrophe
LVI	Rumors and Belief
LVII	Vae Victis!
LVIII	The Accursed
LIX	Patriotism and Private Interests
LX	Maria Clara Weds
LXI	The Chase on the Lake
LXII	Padre Damaso Explains
LXIII	Christmas Eve
	Epilogue
	Glossary

Author’s Dedication

To My Fatherland:

Recorded in the history of human sufferings is a cancer of so malignant a character that the least touch irritates it and awakens in it the sharpest pains. Thus, how many times, when in the midst of modern civilizations I have wished to call thee before me, now to accompany me in memories, now to compare thee with other countries, hath thy dear image presented itself showing a social cancer like to that other!

Desiring thy welfare, which is our own, and seeking the best treatment, I will do with thee what the ancients did with their sick, exposing them on the steps of the temple so that every one who came to invoke the Divinity might offer them a remedy.

And to this end, I will strive to reproduce thy condition faithfully, without discriminations; I will raise a part of the veil that covers the evil, sacrificing to truth everything, even vanity itself, since, as thy son, I am conscious that I also suffer from thy defects and weaknesses.

THE AUTHOR

EUROPE, 1886

[1]

[Contents]

Chapter I
A Social Gathering

On the last of October Don Santiago de los Santos, popularly known as Capitan Tiago, gave a dinner. In spite of the fact that, contrary to his usual custom, he had made the announcement only that afternoon, it was already the sole topic of conversation in Binondo and adjacent districts, and even in the Walled City, for at that time Capitan Tiago was considered one of the most hospitable of men, and it was well known that his house, like his country, shut its doors against nothing except commerce and all new or bold ideas. Like an electric shock the announcement ran through the world of parasites, bores, and hangers-on, whom God in His infinite bounty creates and so kindly multiplies in Manila. Some looked at once for shoe-polish, others for buttons and cravats, but all were especially concerned about how to greet the master of the house in the most familiar tone, in order to create an atmosphere of ancient friendship or, if occasion should arise, to excuse a late arrival.

This dinner was given in a house on Calle Anloague, and although we do not remember the number we will describe it in such a way that it may still be recognized, provided the earthquakes have not destroyed it. We do not believe that its owner has had it torn down, for such labors are generally entrusted to God or nature—which Powers hold the contracts also for many of the projects of our government. It [2]is a rather large building, in the style of many in the country, and fronts upon the arm of the Pasig which is known to some as the Binondo River, and which, like all the streams in Manila, plays the varied rôles of bath, sewer, laundry, fishery, means of transportation and communication, and even drinking water if the Chinese water-carrier finds it convenient. It is worthy of note that in the distance of nearly a mile this important artery of the district, where traffic is most dense and movement most deafening, can boast of only one wooden bridge, which is out of repair on one side for six months and impassable on the other for the rest of the year, so that during the hot season the ponies take advantage of this permanent *status quo* to jump off the bridge into the water, to the great surprise of the abstracted mortal who may be dozing inside the carriage or philosophizing upon the progress of the age.

The house of which we are speaking is somewhat low and not exactly correct in all its lines: whether the architect who built it was afflicted with poor eyesight or whether the earthquakes and typhoons have twisted it out of shape, no one can say with certainty. A wide staircase with green newels and carpeted steps leads from the tiled entrance up to the main floor between rows of flower-pots set upon pedestals of motley-colored and fantastically decorated Chinese porcelain. Since there are neither porters nor servants who demand invitation cards, we will go in, O you who read this, whether friend or foe, if you are attracted by the strains of the orchestra, the lights, or the suggestive rattling of dishes, knives, and forks, and if you wish to see what such a gathering is like in the distant Pearl of the Orient. Gladly, and for my own comfort, I should spare you this description of the house, were it not of great importance, since we mortals in general are very much like tortoises: we are esteemed and classified according to our shells; in this and still other respects the mortals of the Philippines in particular also resemble tortoises.

If we go up the stairs, we immediately find ourselves in [3]a spacious hallway, called there, for some unknown reason, the *caida*, which tonight serves as the dining-room and at the same time affords a place for the orchestra. In the center a large table profusely and expensively decorated seems to beckon to the hanger-on with sweet promises, while it threatens the bashful maiden, the simple*dalaga*, with two mortal hours in the company of strangers whose language and conversation usually have a very restricted and special character.
Contrasted with these terrestrial preparations are the motley paintings on the walls representing religious matters, such as “Purgatory,” “Hell,” “The Last Judgment,” “The Death of the Just,” and “The Death of the Sinner.”

At the back of the room, fastened in a splendid and elegant framework, in the Renaissance style, possibly by Arévalo, is a glass case in which are seen the figures of two old women. The inscription on this reads: “Our Lady of Peace and Prosperous Voyages, who is worshiped in Antipolo, visiting in the disguise of a beggar the holy and renowned Capitana Inez during her sickness.”[1] While the work reveals little taste or art, yet it possesses in compensation an extreme realism, for to judge from the yellow and bluish tints of her face the sick woman seems to be already a decaying corpse, and the glasses and other objects, accompaniments of long illness, are so

minutely reproduced that even their contents may be distinguished. In looking at these pictures, which excite the appetite and inspire gay bucolic ideas, one may perhaps be led to think that the malicious host is well acquainted with the characters of the majority of those who are to sit at his table and that, in order to conceal his own way of thinking, he has hung from the ceiling costly Chinese lanterns; bird-cages without birds; red, green, and blue globes of frosted glass; faded air-plants; and dried and inflated fishes, which they call *botetes*. The view is closed on the side of the river by curious wooden arches, half Chinese and half [4]European, affording glimpses of a terrace with arbors and bowers faintly lighted by paper lanterns of many colors.

In the sala, among massive mirrors and gleaming chandeliers, the guests are assembled. Here, on a raised platform, stands a grand piano of great price, which tonight has the additional virtue of not being played upon. Here, hanging on the wall, is an oil-painting of a handsome man in full dress, rigid, erect, straight as the tasseled cane he holds in his stiff, ring-covered fingers—the whole seeming to say, "Ahem! See how well dressed and how dignified I am!" The furnishings of the room are elegant and perhaps uncomfortable and unhealthful, since the master of the house would consider not so much the comfort and health of his guests as his own ostentation, "A terrible thing is dysentery," he would say to them, "but you are sitting in European chairs and that is something you don't find every day."

This room is almost filled with people, the men being separated from the women as in synagogues and Catholic churches. The women consist of a number of Filipino and Spanish maidens, who, when they open their mouths to yawn, instantly cover them with their fans and who murmur only a few words to each other, any conversation ventured upon dying out in monosyllables like the sounds heard in a house at night, sounds made by the rats and lizards. Is it perhaps the different likenesses of Our Lady hanging on the walls that force them to silence and a religious demeanor or is it that the women here are an exception?

A cousin of Capitan Tiago, a sweet-faced old woman, who speaks Spanish quite badly, is the only one receiving the ladies. To offer to the Spanish ladies a plate of cigars and *buyos*, to extend her hand to her countrywomen to be kissed, exactly as the friars do,—this is the sum of her courtesy, her

policy. The poor old lady soon became bored, and taking advantage of the noise of a plate breaking, rushed precipitately away, muttering, "*Jesús!* Just wait, you rascals!" and failed to reappear.

The men, for their part, are making more of a stir. Some [5]cadets in one corner are conversing in a lively manner but in low tones, looking around now and then to point out different persons in the room while they laugh more or less openly among themselves. In contrast, two foreigners dressed in white are promenading silently from one end of the room to the other with their hands crossed behind their backs, like the bored passengers on the deck of a ship. All the interest and the greatest animation proceed from a group composed of two priests, two civilians, and a soldier who are seated around a small table on which are seen bottles of wine and English biscuits. The soldier, a tall, elderly lieutenant with an austere countenance—a Duke of Alva straggling behind in the roster of the Civil Guard—talks little, but in a harsh, curt way. One of the priests, a youthful Dominican friar, handsome, graceful, polished as the gold-mounted eyeglasses he wears, maintains a premature gravity. He is the curate of Binondo and has been in former years a professor in the college of San Juan de Letran,[2] where he enjoyed the reputation of being a consummate dialectician, so much so that in the days when the sons of Guzman[3] still dared to match themselves in subtleties with laymen, the able disputant B. de Luna had never been able either to catch or to confuse him, the distinctions made by Fray Sibyla leaving his opponent in the situation of a fisherman who tries to catch eels with a lasso. The Dominican says little, appearing to weigh his words.

Quite in contrast, the other priest, a Franciscan, talks much and gesticulates more. In spite of the fact that his hair is beginning to turn gray, he seems to be preserving [6]well his robust constitution, while his regular features, his rather disquieting glance, his wide jaws and herculean frame give him the appearance of a Roman noble in disguise and make us involuntarily recall one of those three monks of whom Heine tells in his "Gods in Exile," who at the September equinox in the Tyrol used to cross a lake at midnight and each time place in the hand of the poor boatman a silver piece, cold as ice, which left him full of terror.[4] But Fray Damaso is not so mysterious as they were. He is full of merriment, and if the tone of his voice is rough like that of a man who has never had occasion to correct himself and who believes that whatever he says is holy and above improvement, still his frank, merry

laugh wipes out this disagreeable impression and even obliges us to pardon his showing to the room bare feet and hairy legs that would make the fortune of a Mendieta in the Quiapo fairs.[5]

One of the civilians is a very small man with a black beard, the only thing notable about him being his nose, which, to judge from its size, ought not to belong to him. The other is a rubicund youth, who seems to have arrived but recently in the country. With him the Franciscan is carrying on a lively discussion.

"You'll see," the friar was saying, "when you've been here a few months you'll be convinced of what I say. It's one thing to govern in Madrid and another to live in the Philippines."

"But—"

"I, for example," continued Fray Damaso, raising his voice still higher to prevent the other from speaking, "I, for example, who can look back over twenty-three years of bananas and *morisqueta*, know whereof I speak. Don't [7]come at me with theories and fine speeches, for I know the Indian.[6] Mark well that the moment I arrived in the country I was assigned to a toxin, small it is true, but especially devoted to agriculture. I didn't understand Tagalog very well then, but I was, soon confessing the women, and we understood one another and they came to like me so well that three years later, when I was transferred to another and larger town, made vacant by the death of the native curate, all fell to weeping, they heaped gifts upon me, they escorted me with music—"

"But that only goes to show—"

"Wait, wait! Don't be so hasty! My successor remained a shorter time, and when he left he had more attendance, more tears, and more music. Yet he had been more given to whipping and had raised the fees in the parish to almost double."

"But you will allow me—"

"But that isn't all. I stayed in the town of San Diego twenty years and it has been only a few months since I left it."

Here he showed signs of chagrin.

“Twenty years, no one can deny, are more than sufficient to get acquainted with a town. San Diego has a population of six thousand souls and I knew every inhabitant as well as if I had been his mother and wet-nurse. I knew in which foot this one was lame, where the shoe pinched that one, who was courting that girl, what affairs she had had and with whom, who was the real father of the child, and so on—for I was the confessor of every last one, and they took care not to fail in their duty. Our host, Santiago, will tell you whether I am speaking the truth, for he has a lot of land there and that was where we first became friends. Well then, you may see what the Indian is: when I left I was escorted by only a few old women and some of the tertiary brethren—and that after I had been there twenty years!”

“But I don’t see what that has to do with the abolition [8]of the tobacco monopoly,”[7] ventured the rubicund youth, taking advantage of the Franciscan’s pausing to drink a glass of sherry.
Fray Damaso was so greatly surprised that he nearly let his glass fall. He remained for a moment staring fixedly at the young man.

“What? How’s that?” he was finally able to exclaim in great wonderment. “Is it possible that you don’t see it as clear as day? Don’t you see, my son, that all this proves plainly that the reforms of the ministers are irrational?”

It was now the youth’s turn to look perplexed. The lieutenant wrinkled his eyebrows a little more and the small man nodded toward Fray Damaso equivocally. The Dominican contented himself with almost turning his back on the whole group.

“Do you really believe so?” the young man at length asked with great seriousness, as he looked at the friar with curiosity.

“Do I believe so? As I believe the Gospel! The Indian is so indolent!”

“Ah, pardon me for interrupting you,” said the young man, lowering his voice and drawing his chair a little closer, “but you have said something that awakens all my interest. Does this indolence actually, naturally, exist among the natives or is there some truth in what a foreign traveler says: that with this indolence we excuse our own, as well as our backwardness and our colonial system. He referred to other colonies whose inhabitants belong to the same race—”

[9]"Bah, jealousy! Ask Señor Laruja, who also knows this country. Ask him if there is any equal to the ignorance and indolence of the Indian."
"It's true," affirmed the little man, who was referred to as Señor Laruja. "In no part of the world can you find any one more indolent than the Indian, in no part of the world."

"Nor more vicious, nor more ungrateful!"

"Nor more unmannerly!"

The rubicund youth began to glance about nervously. "Gentlemen," he whispered, "I believe that we are in the house of an Indian. Those young ladies—"

"Bah, don't be so apprehensive! Santiago doesn't consider himself an Indian—and besides, he's not here. And what if he were! These are the nonsensical ideas of the newcomers. Let a few months pass and you will change your opinion, after you have attended a lot of fiestas and *bailúhan*, slept on cots, and eaten your fill of *tinola*."

"Ah, is this thing that you call *tinola* a variety of lotus which makes people —er—forgetful?"

"Nothing of the kind!" exclaimed Fray Damaso with a smile. "You're getting absurd. *Tinola* is a stew of chicken and squash. How long has it been since you got here?"

"Four days," responded the youth, rather offended.

"Have you come as a government employee?"

"No, sir, I've come at my own expense to study the country."

"Man, what a rare bird!" exclaimed Fray Damaso, staring at him with curiosity. "To come at one's own expense and for such foolishness! What a wonder! When there are so many books! And with two fingerbreadths of forehead! Many have written books as big as that! With two fingerbreadths of forehead!"

The Dominican here brusquely broke in upon the conversation. "Did your Reverence, Fray Damaso, say that [10]you had been twenty years in the

town of San Diego and that you had left it? Wasn't your Reverence satisfied with the town?"
At this question, which was put in a very natural and almost negligent tone, Fray Damaso suddenly lost all his merriment and stopped laughing. "No!" he grunted dryly, and let himself back heavily against the back of his chair.

The Dominican went on in a still more indifferent tone. "It must be painful to leave a town where one has been for twenty years and which he knows as well as the clothes he wears. I certainly was sorry to leave Kamiling and that after I had been there only a few months. But my superiors did it for the good of the Orders for my own good."

Fray Damaso, for the first time that evening, seemed to be very thoughtful. Suddenly he brought his fist down on the arm of his chair and with a heavy breath exclaimed: "Either Religion is a fact or it is not! That is, either the curates are free or they are not! The country is going to ruin, it is lost!" And again he struck the arm of his chair.

Everybody in the sala turned toward the group with astonished looks. The Dominican raised his head to stare at the Franciscan from under his glasses. The two foreigners paused a moment, stared with an expression of mingled severity and reproof, then immediately continued their promenade.

"He's in a bad humor because you haven't treated him with deference," murmured Señor Laruja into the ear of the rubicund youth.

"What does your Reverence mean? What's the trouble?" inquired the Dominican and the lieutenant at the same time, but in different tones.

"That's why so many calamities come! The ruling powers support heretics against the ministers of God!" continued the Franciscan, raising his heavy fists.

[11]"What do you mean?" again inquired the frowning lieutenant, half rising from his chair.
"What do I mean?" repeated Fray Damaso, raising his voice and facing the lieutenant. "I'll tell you what I mean. I, yes I, mean to say that when a priest throws out of his cemetery the corpse of a heretic, no one, not even the King himself, has any right to interfere and much less to impose any punishment! But a little General—a little General Calamity—"

“Padre, his Excellency is the Vice-Regal Patron!” shouted the soldier, rising to his feet.

“Excellency! Vice-Regal Patron! What of that!” retorted the Franciscan, also rising. “In other times he would have been dragged down a staircase as the religious orders once did with the impious Governor Bustamente.[8] Those were indeed the days of faith.”

“I warn you that I can’t permit this! His Excellency represents his Majesty the King!”

“King or rook! What difference does that make? For us there is no king other than the legitimate[9]—”

“Halt!” shouted the lieutenant in a threatening tone, as if he were commanding his soldiers. “Either you withdraw what you have said or tomorrow I will report it to his Excellency!”

“Go ahead—right now—go on!” was the sarcastic [12]rejoinder of Fray Damaso as he approached the officer with clenched fists. “Do you think that because I wear the cloth, I’m afraid? Go now, while I can lend you my carriage!”

The dispute was taking a ludicrous turn, but fortunately the Dominican intervened. “Gentlemen,” he began in an authoritative tone and with the nasal twang that so well becomes the friars, “you must not confuse things or seek for offenses where there are none. We must distinguish in the words of Fray Damaso those of the man from those of the priest. The latter, as such, *per se*, can never give offense, because they spring from absolute truth, while in those of the man there is a secondary distinction to be made: those which he utters*ab irato*, those which he utters *ex ore*, but not *in corde*, and those which he does utter *in corde*. These last are the only ones that can really offend, and only according to whether they preexisted as a motive *in mente*, or arose solely *per accidens* in the heat of the discussion, if there really exist—”

“But I, by *accidens* and for my own part, understand his motives, Padre Sibyla,” broke in the old soldier, who saw himself about to be entangled in so many distinctions that he feared lest he might still be held to blame. “I understand the motives about which your Reverence is going to make distinctions. During the absence of Padre Damaso from San Diego, his

coadjutor buried the body of an extremely worthy individual—yes, sir, extremely worthy, for I had had dealings with him many times and had been entertained in his house. What if he never went to confession, what does that matter? Neither do I go to confession! But to say that he committed suicide is a lie, a slander! A man such as he was, who has a son upon whom he centers his affection and hopes, a man who has faith in God, who recognizes his duties to society, a just and honorable man, does not commit suicide. This much I will say and will refrain from expressing the rest of my thoughts here, so please your Reverence."

[13]Then, turning his back on the Franciscan, he went on: "Now then, this priest on his return to the town, after maltreating the poor coadjutor, had the corpse dug up and taken away from the cemetery to be buried I don't know where. The people of San Diego were cowardly enough not to protest, although it is true that few knew of the outrage. The dead man had no relatives there and his only son was in Europe. But his Excellency learned of the affair and as he is an upright man asked for some punishment—and Padre Damaso was transferred to a better town. That's all there is to it. Now your Reverence can make your distinctions."
So saying, he withdrew from the group.

"I'm sorry that I inadvertently brought up so delicate a subject," said Padre Sibyla sadly. "But, after all, if there has been a gain in the change of towns —"

"How is there to be a gain? And what of all the things that are lost in moving, the letters, and the—and everything that is mislaid?" interrupted Fray Damaso, stammering in the vain effort to control his anger.

Little by little the party resumed its former tranquillity. Other guests had come in, among them a lame old Spaniard of mild and inoffensive aspect leaning on the arm of an elderly Filipina, who was resplendent in frizzes and paint and a European gown. The group welcomed them heartily, and Doctor De Espadaña and his señora, the *Doctora* Doña Victorina, took their seats among our acquaintances. Some newspaper reporters and shopkeepers greeted one another and moved about aimlessly without knowing just what to do.

“But can you tell me, Señor Laruja, what kind of man our host is?” inquired the rubicund youth. “I haven’t been introduced to him yet.”

“They say that he has gone out. I haven’t seen him either.”

“There’s no need of introductions here,” volunteered Fray Damaso. “Santiago is made of the right stuff.”

[14]“No, he’s not the man who invented gunpowder,”10 added Laruja.
“You too, Señor Laruja,” exclaimed Doña Victorina in mild reproach, as she fanned herself. “How could the poor man invent gunpowder if, as is said, the Chinese invented it centuries ago?”

“The Chinese! Are you crazy?” cried Fray Damaso. “Out with you! A Franciscan, one of my Order, Fray What-do-you-call-him Savalls,11 invented it in the—ah the seventh century!”

“A Franciscan? Well, he must have been a missionary in China, that Padre Savalls,” replied the lady, who did not thus easily part from her beliefs.

“Schwartz,12 perhaps you mean, señora,” said Fray Sibyla, without looking at her.

“I don’t know. Fray Damaso said a Franciscan and I was only repeating.”

“Well, Savalls or Chevas, what does it matter? The difference of a letter doesn’t make him a Chinaman,” replied the Franciscan in bad humor.

“And in the fourteenth century, not the seventh,” added the Dominican in a tone of correction, as if to mortify the pride of the other friar.

“Well, neither does a century more or less make him a Dominican.”

“Don’t get angry, your Reverence,” admonished Padre Sibyla, smiling. “So much the better that he did invent it so as to save his brethren the trouble.”

“And did you say, Padre Sibyla, that it was in the fourteenth century?” asked Doña Victorina with great interest. “Was that before or after Christ?”

Fortunately for the individual questioned, two persons entered the room.[15]

1A similar picture is found in the convento at Antipolo.—*Author’s note*.

2A school of secondary instruction conducted by the Dominican Fathers, by whom it was taken over in 1640. “It had its first beginning in the house of a pious Spaniard, called Juan Geronimo Guerrero, who had dedicated himself, with Christian piety, to gathering orphan boys in his house, where he raised, clothed, and sustained them, and taught them to read and to write, and much more, to live in the fear of God.”—Blair and Robertson, *The Philippine Islands*, Vol. XLV, p. 208.—TR.

3The Dominican friars, whose order was founded by Dominic de Guzman.—TR.

4In the story mentioned, the three monks were the old Roman god Bacchus and two of his satellites, in the disguise of Franciscan friars,—TR.

5According to a note to the Barcelona edition of this novel, Mendieta was a character well known in Manila, doorkeeper at the Alcaldía, impresario of children’s theaters, director of a merry-go-round, etc.—TR.

6See Glossary.

7The “tobacco monopoly” was established during the administration of Basco de Vargas (1778–1787), one of the ablest governors Spain sent to the Philippines, in order to provide revenue for the local government and to encourage agricultural development. The operation of the monopoly, however, soon degenerated into a system of “graft” and petty abuse which bore heartily upon the natives (see Zuñiga’s *Estadismo*), and the abolition of it in 1881 was one of the heroic efforts made by the Spanish civil administrators to adjust the archaic colonial system to the changing conditions in the Archipelago.—TR.

8As a result of his severity in enforcing the payment of sums due the royal treasury on account of the galleon trade, in which the religious orders were heavily interested, Governor Fernando de Bustillos Bustamente y Rueda met a violent death at the hands of a mob headed by friars, October 11, 1719. See Blair and Robertson,*The Philippine Islands*, Vol. XLIV; Montero y Vidal, *Historia General de Filipinas*, Vol. I, Chap. XXXV.—TR.

9A reference to the fact that the clerical party in Spain refused to accept the decree of Ferdinand VII setting aside the Salic law and naming his daughter Isabella as his successor, and, upon the death of Ferdinand, supported the claim of the nearest male heir, Don Carlos de Bourbon, thus giving rise to the Carlist movement. Some writers state that severe measures had to be adopted to compel many of the friars in the Philippines to use the feminine pronoun in their prayers for the sovereign, just whom the reverend gentlemen expected to deceive not being explained.—TR.

10An apothegm equivalent to the English, “He’ll never set any rivers on fire.”—TR.

11The name of a Carlist leader in Spain.—TR.

12A German Franciscan monk who is said to have invented gunpowder about 1330.

[Contents]

Chapter II
Crisostomo Ibarra

It was not two beautiful and well-gowned young women that attracted the attention of all, even including Fray Sibyla, nor was it his Excellency the Captain-General with his staff, that the lieutenant should start from his abstraction and take a couple of steps forward, or that Fray Damaso should look as if turned to stone; it was simply the original of the oil-painting leading by the hand a young man dressed in deep mourning.

“Good evening, gentlemen! Good evening, Padre!” were the greetings of Capitan Tiago as he kissed the hands of the priests, who forgot to bestow upon him their benediction. The Dominican had taken off his glasses to stare at the newly arrived youth, while Fray Damaso was pale and unnaturally wide-eyed.

“I have the honor of presenting to you Don Crisostomo Ibarra, the son of my deceased friend,” went on Capitan Tiago. “The young gentleman has just arrived from Europe and I went to meet him.”

At the mention of the name exclamations were heard. The lieutenant forgot to pay his respects to his host and approached the young man, looking him over from head to foot. The young man himself at that moment was exchanging the conventional greetings with all in the group, nor did there seem to be any thing extraordinary about him except his mourning garments in the center of that brilliantly lighted room. Yet in spite of them his remarkable stature, his features, and his movements breathed forth an air of healthy youthfulness in which both body and mind had equally developed. There might have been [16]noticed in his frank, pleasant face some faint traces of Spanish blood showing through a beautiful brown color, slightly flushed at the cheeks as a result perhaps of his residence in cold countries.
“What!” he exclaimed with joyful surprise, “the curate of my native town! Padre Damaso, my father’s intimate friend!”

Every look in the room was directed toward the Franciscan, who made no movement.

“Pardon me, perhaps I’m mistaken,” added Ibarra, embarrassed.

“You are not mistaken,” the friar was at last able to articulate in a changed voice, “but your father was never an intimate friend of mine.”

Ibarra slowly withdrew his extended hand, looking greatly surprised, and turned to encounter the gloomy gaze of the lieutenant fixed on him.

“Young man, are you the son of Don Rafael Ibarra?” he asked.

The youth bowed. Fray Damaso partly rose in his chair and stared fixedly at the lieutenant.

“Welcome back to your country! And may you be happier in it than your father was!” exclaimed the officer in a trembling voice. “I knew him well and can say that he was one of the worthiest and most honorable men in the Philippines.”

“Sir,” replied Ibarra, deeply moved, “the praise you bestow upon my father removes my doubts about the manner of his death, of which I, his son, am yet ignorant.”

The eyes of the old soldier filled with tears and turning away hastily he withdrew. The young man thus found himself alone in the center of the room. His host having disappeared, he saw no one who might introduce him to the young ladies, many of whom were watching him with interest. After a few moments of hesitation he started toward them in a simple and natural manner.

“Allow me,” he said, “to overstep the rules of strict [17]etiquette. It has been seven years since I have been in my own country and upon returning to it I cannot suppress my admiration and refrain from paying my respects to its most precious ornaments, the ladies.”
But as none of them ventured a reply, he found himself obliged to retire. He then turned toward a group of men who, upon seeing him approach, arranged themselves in a semicircle.

“Gentlemen,” he addressed them, “it is a custom in Germany, when a stranger finds himself at a function and there is no one to introduce him to those present, that he give his name and so introduce himself. Allow me to adopt this usage here, not to introduce foreign customs when our own are so beautiful, but because I find myself driven to it by necessity. I have already

paid my respects to the skies and to the ladies of my native land; now I wish to greet its citizens, my fellow-countrymen. Gentlemen, my name is Juan Crisostomo Ibarra y Magsalin."

The others gave their names, more or less obscure, and unimportant here.

"My name is A———," said one youth dryly, as he made a slight bow.

"Then I have the honor of addressing the poet whose works have done so much to keep up my enthusiasm for my native land. It is said that you do not write any more, but I could not learn the reason."

"The reason? Because one does not seek inspiration in order to debase himself and lie. One writer has been imprisoned for having put a very obvious truth into verse. They may have called me a poet but they sha'n't call me a fool."

"And may I enquire what that truth was?"

"He said that the lion's son is also a lion. He came very near to being exiled for it," replied the strange youth, moving away from the group.

A man with a smiling face, dressed in the fashion of the natives of the country, with diamond studs in his shirt-bosom, [18]came up at that moment almost running. He went directly to Ibarra and grasped his hand, saying, "Señor Ibarra, I've been eager to make your acquaintance. Capitan Tiago is a friend of mine and I knew your respected father. I am known as Capitan Tinong and live in Tondo, where you will always be welcome. I hope that you will honor me with a visit. Come and dine with us tomorrow." He smiled and rubbed his hands.
"Thank you," replied Ibarra, warmly, charmed with such amiability, "but tomorrow morning I must leave for San Diego."

"How unfortunate! Then it will be on your return."

"Dinner is served!" announced a waiter from the café La Campana, and the guests began to file out toward the table, the women, especially the Filipinas, with great hesitation.[19]
[Contents]

Chapter III
The Dinner

Jele, jele, bago quiere.1

Fray Sibyla seemed to be very content as he moved along tranquilly with the look of disdain no longer playing about his thin, refined lips. He even condescended to speak to the lame doctor, De Espadaña, who answered in monosyllables only, as he was somewhat of a stutterer. The Franciscan was in a frightful humor, kicking at the chairs and even elbowing a cadet out of his way. The lieutenant was grave while the others talked vivaciously, praising the magnificence of the table. Doña Victorina, however, was just turning up her nose in disdain when she suddenly became as furious as a trampled serpent—the lieutenant had stepped on the train of her gown.

"Haven't you any eyes?" she demanded.

"Yes, señora, two better than yours, but the fact is that I was admiring your frizzes," retorted the rather ungallant soldier as he moved away from her.

As if from instinct the two friars both started toward the head of the table, perhaps from habit, and then, as might have been expected, the same thing happened that occurs with the competitors for a university position, who openly exalt the qualifications and superiority of their opponents, later giving to understand that just the contrary was meant, and who murmur and grumble when they do not receive the appointment.

[20]"For you, Fray Damaso."
"For you, Fray Sibyla."

"An older friend of the family—confessor of the deceased lady—age, dignity, and authority—"

"Not so very old, either! On the other hand, you are the curate of the district," replied Fray Damaso sourly, without taking his hand from the back of the chair.

"Since you command it, I obey," concluded Fray Sibyla, disposing himself to take the seat.

“I don’t command it!” protested the Franciscan. “I don’t command it!”

Fray Sibyla was about to seat himself without paying any more attention to these protests when his eyes happened to encounter those of the lieutenant. According to clerical opinion in the Philippines, the highest secular official is inferior to a friar-cook: *cedant arma togae*, said Cicero in the Senate—*cedant arma cottae*, say the friars in the Philippines.2

But Fray Sibyla was a well-bred person, so he said, “Lieutenant, here we are in the world and not in the church. The seat of honor belongs to you.” To judge from the tone of his voice, however, even in the world it really did belong to him, and the lieutenant, either to keep out of trouble or to avoid sitting between two friars, curtly declined.

None of the claimants had given a thought to their host. Ibarra noticed him watching the scene with a smile of satisfaction.

“How’s this, Don Santiago, aren’t you going to sit down with us?”

But all the seats were occupied; Lucullus was not to sup in the house of Lucullus.

“Sit still, don’t get up!” said Capitan Tiago, placing his hand on the young man’s shoulder. “This fiesta is for the special purpose of giving thanks to the Virgin for your [21]safe arrival. *Oy!* Bring on the *tinola!* I ordered *tinola* as you doubtless have not tasted any for so long a time.”
A large steaming tureen was brought in. The Dominican, after muttering the benedicite, to which scarcely any one knew how to respond, began to serve the contents. But whether from carelessness or other cause, Padre Damaso received a plate in which a bare neck and a tough wing of chicken floated about in a large quantity of soup amid lumps of squash, while the others were eating legs and breasts, especially Ibarra, to whose lot fell the second joints. Observing all this, the Franciscan mashed up some pieces of squash, barely tasted the soup, dropped his spoon noisily, and roughly pushed his plate away. The Dominican was very busy talking to the rubicund youth.

“How long have you been away from the country?” Laruja asked Ibarra.

“Almost seven years.”

“Then you have probably forgotten all about it.”

“Quite the contrary. Even if my country does seem to have forgotten me, I have always thought about it.”

“How do you mean that it has forgotten you?” inquired the rubicund youth.

“I mean that it has been a year since I have received any news from here, so that I find myself a stranger who does not yet know how and when his father died.”

This statement drew a sudden exclamation from the lieutenant.

“And where were you that you didn’t telegraph?” asked Doña Victorina. “When we were married we telegraphed to the Peñinsula.”[3]

“Señora, for the past two years I have been in the northern part of Europe, in Germany and Russian Poland.”

Doctor De Espadaña, who until now had not ventured upon any conversation, thought this a good opportunity to say something. “I—I knew in S-spain a P-pole from [22]W-warsaw, c-called S-stadtnitzki, if I r-remember c-correctly. P-perhaps you s-saw him?” he asked timidly and almost blushingly.
“It’s very likely,” answered Ibarra in a friendly manner, “but just at this moment I don’t recall him.”

“B-but you c-couldn’t have c-confused him with any one else,” went on the Doctor, taking courage. “He was r-ruddy as gold and t-talked Spanish very b-badly.”

“Those are good clues, but unfortunately while there I talked Spanish only in a few consulates.”

“How then did you get along?” asked the wondering Doña Victorina.

“The language of the country served my needs, madam.”

“Do you also speak English?” inquired the Dominican, who had been in Hongkong, and who was a master of pidgin-English, that adulteration of Shakespeare’s tongue used by the sons of the Celestial Empire.

“I stayed in England a year among people who talked nothing but English.”

“Which country of Europe pleased you the most?” asked the rubicund youth.

“After Spain, my second fatherland, any country of free Europe.”

“And you who seem to have traveled so much, tell us what do you consider the most notable thing that you have seen?” inquired Laruja.

Ibarra appeared to reflect. “Notable—in what way?”

“For example, in regard to the life of the people—the social, political, religious life—in general, in its essential features—as a whole.”

Ibarra paused thoughtfully before replying. “Frankly, I like everything in those people, setting aside the national pride of each one. But before visiting a country, I tried to familiarize myself with its history, its Exodus, if I may so speak, and afterwards I found everything quite natural. I have observed that the prosperity or misery of each people is in direct proportion to its liberties or its prejudices and, [23]accordingly, to the sacrifices or the selfishness of its forefathers.”

“And haven’t you observed anything more than that?” broke in the Franciscan with a sneer. Since the beginning of the dinner he had not uttered a single word, his whole attention having been taking up, no doubt, with the food. “It wasn’t worth while to squander your fortune to learn so trifling a thing. Any schoolboy knows that.”

Ibarra was placed in an embarrassing position, and the rest looked from one to the other as if fearing a disagreeable scene. He was about to say, “The dinner is nearly over and his Reverence is now satiated,” but restrained himself and merely remarked to the others, “Gentlemen, don’t be surprised at the familiarity with which our former curate treats me. He treated me so when I was a child, and the years seem to make no difference in his Reverence. I appreciate it, too, because it recalls the days when his Reverence visited our home and honored my father’s table.”

The Dominican glanced furtively at the Franciscan, who was trembling visibly. Ibarra continued as he rose from the table: “You will now permit me to retire, since, as I have just arrived and must go away tomorrow morning, there remain some important business matters for me to attend to. The principal part of the dinner is over and I drink but little wine and seldom

touch cordials. Gentlemen, all for Spain and the Philippines!" Saying this, he drained his glass, which he had not before touched. The old lieutenant silently followed his example.

"Don't go!" whispered Capitan Tiago. "Maria Clara will be here. Isabel has gone to get her. The new curate of your town, who is a saint, is also coming."

"I'll call tomorrow before starting. I've a very important visit to make now." With this he went away.

Meanwhile the Franciscan had recovered himself. "Do you see?" he said to the rubicund youth, at the same time flourishing his dessert spoon. "That comes from pride. They can't stand to have the curate correct them. [24]They even think that they are respectable persons. It's the evil result of sending young men to Europe. The government ought to prohibit it."

"And how about the lieutenant?" Doña Victorina chimed in upon the Franciscan, "he didn't get the frown off his face the whole evening. He did well to leave us so old and still only a lieutenant!" The lady could not forget the allusion to her frizzes and the trampled ruffles of her gown.

That night the rubicund youth wrote down, among other things, the following title for a chapter in his *Colonial Studies*: "Concerning the manner in which the neck and wing of a chicken in a friar's plate of soup may disturb the merriment of a feast." Among his notes there appeared these observations: "In the Philippines the most unnecessary person at a dinner is he who gives it, for they are quite capable of beginning by throwing the host into the street and then everything will go on smoothly. Under present conditions it would perhaps be a good thing not to allow the Filipinos to leave the country, and even not to teach them to read."[25]

1"He says that he doesn't want it when it is exactly what he does want." An expression used in the mongrel Spanish-Tagalog 'market language' of Manila and Cavite, especially among the children,—somewhat akin to the English 'sour grapes.'—TR.

2Arms should yield to the toga (military to civil power). Arms should yield to the surplice (military to religious power),—TR.

3For *Peninsula*, i.e., Spain. The change of *n* to *ñ* was common among ignorant Filipinos.—TR.

[Contents]

Chapter IV
Heretic and Filibuster

Ibarra stood undecided for a moment. The night breeze, which during those months blows cool enough in Manila, seemed to drive from his forehead the light cloud that had darkened it. He took off his hat and drew a deep breath. Carriages flashed by, public rigs moved along at a sleepy pace, pedestrians of many nationalities were passing. He walked along at that irregular pace which indicates thoughtful abstraction or freedom from care, directing his steps toward Binondo Plaza and looking about him as if to recall the place. There were the same streets and the identical houses with their white and blue walls, whitewashed, or frescoed in bad imitation of granite; the church continued to show its illuminated clock face; there were the same Chinese shops with their soiled curtains and their iron gratings, in one of which was a bar that he, in imitation of the street urchins of Manila, had twisted one night; it was still unstraightened. "How slowly everything moves," he murmured as he turned into Calle Sacristia. The ice-cream venders were repeating the same shrill cry, "*Sorbeteee!*" while the smoky lamps still lighted the identical Chinese stands and those of the old women who sold candy and fruit.

"Wonderful!" he exclaimed. "There's the same Chinese who was here seven years ago, and that old woman—the very same! It might be said that tonight I've dreamed of a seven years' journey in Europe. Good heavens, that pavement is still in the same unrepaired condition as when I left!" True it was that the stones of the sidewalk on the corner of San Jacinto and Sacristia were still loose.

While he was meditating upon this marvel of the city's [26]stability in a country where everything is so unstable, a hand was placed lightly on his shoulder. He raised his head to see the old lieutenant gazing at him with something like a smile in place of the hard expression and the frown which usually characterized him.
"Young man, be careful! Learn from your father!" was the abrupt greeting of the old soldier.

"Pardon me, but you seem to have thought a great deal of my father. Can you tell me how he died?" asked Ibarra, staring at him.

“What! Don’t you know about it?” asked the officer.

“I asked Don Santiago about it, but he wouldn’t promise to tell me until tomorrow. Perhaps you know?”

“I should say I do, as does everybody else. He died in prison!”

The young man stepped backward a pace and gazed searchingly at the lieutenant. “In prison? Who died in prison?”

“Your father, man, since he was in confinement,” was the somewhat surprised answer.

“My father—in prison—confined in a prison? What are you talking about? Do you know who my father was? Are you—?” demanded the young man, seizing the officer’s arm.

“I rather think that I’m not mistaken. He was Don Rafael Ibarra.”

“Yes, Don Rafael Ibarra,” echoed the youth weakly.

“Well, I thought you knew about it,” muttered the soldier in a tone of compassion as he saw what was passing in Ibarra’s mind. “I supposed that you—but be brave! Here one cannot be honest and keep out of jail.”

“I must believe that you are not joking with me,” replied Ibarra in a weak voice, after a few moments’ silence. “Can you tell me why he was in prison?”

The old man seemed to be perplexed. “It’s strange to me that your family affairs were not made known to you.”

“His last letter, a year ago, said that I should not be [27]uneasy if he did not write, as he was very busy. He charged me to continue my studies and—sent me his blessing.”
“Then he wrote that letter to you just before he died. It will soon be a year since we buried him.”

“But why was my father a prisoner?”

“For a very honorable reason. But come with me to the barracks and I’ll tell you as we go along. Take my arm.”

They moved along for some time in silence. The elder seemed to be in deep thought and to be seeking inspiration from his goatee, which he stroked continually.

"As you well know," he began, "your father was the richest man in the province, and while many loved and respected him, there were also some who envied and hated him. We Spaniards who come to the Philippines are unfortunately not all we ought to be. I say this as much on account of one of your ancestors as on account of your father's enemies. The continual changes, the corruption in the higher circles, the favoritism, the low cost and the shortness of the journey, are to blame for it all. The worst characters of the Peninsula come here, and even if a good man does come, the country soon ruins him. So it was that your father had a number of enemies among the curates and other Spaniards."

Here he hesitated for a while. "Some months after your departure the troubles with Padre Damaso began, but I am unable to explain the real cause of them. Fray Damaso accused him of not coming to confession, although he had not done so formerly and they had nevertheless been good friends, as you may still remember. Moreover, Don Rafael was a very upright man, more so than many of those who regularly attend confession and than the confessors themselves. He had framed for himself a rigid morality and often said to me, when he talked of these troubles, 'Señor Guevara, do you believe that God will pardon any crime, a murder for instance, solely by a man's telling it to a priest—a man after all and one whose duty it is to keep quiet about it—by his fearing that he [28]will roast in hell as a penance—by being cowardly and certainly shameless into the bargain? I have another conception of God,' he used to say, 'for in my opinion one evil does not correct another, nor is a crime to be expiated by vain lamentings or by giving alms to the Church. Take this example: if I have killed the father of a family, if I have made of a woman a sorrowing widow and destitute orphans of some happy children, have I satisfied eternal Justice by letting myself be hanged, or by entrusting my secret to one who is obliged to guard it for me, or by giving alms to priests who are least in need of them, or by buying indulgences and lamenting night and day? What of the widow and the orphans? My conscience tells me that I should try to take the place of him whom I killed, that I should dedicate my whole life to the welfare of the family whose misfortunes I caused. But

even so, who can replace the love of a husband and a father?' Thus your father reasoned and by this strict standard of conduct regulated all his actions, so that it can be said that he never injured anybody. On the contrary, he endeavored by his good deeds to wipe out some injustices which he said your ancestors had committed. But to get back to his troubles with the curate—these took on a serious aspect. Padre Damaso denounced him from the pulpit, and that he did not expressly name him was a miracle, since anything might have been expected of such a character. I foresaw that sooner or later the affair would have serious results."

Again the old lieutenant paused. "There happened to be wandering about the province an ex-artilleryman who has been discharged from the army on account of his stupidity and ignorance. As the man had to live and he was not permitted to engage in manual labor, which would injure our prestige, he somehow or other obtained a position as collector of the tax on vehicles. The poor devil had no education at all, a fact of which the natives soon became aware, as it was a marvel for them to see a Spaniard who didn't know how to read and write. Every one [29]ridiculed him and the payment of the tax was the occasion of broad smiles. He knew that he was an object of ridicule and this tended to sour his disposition even more, rough and bad as it had formerly been. They would purposely hand him the papers upside down to see his efforts to read them, and wherever he found a blank space he would scribble a lot of pothooks which rather fitly passed for his signature. The natives mocked while they paid him. He swallowed his pride and made the collections, but was in such a state of mind that he had no respect for any one. He even came to have some hard words with your father.

"One day it happened that he was in a shop turning a document over and over in the effort to get it straight when a schoolboy began to make signs to his companions and to point laughingly at the collector with his finger. The fellow heard the laughter and saw the joke reflected in the solemn faces of the bystanders. He lost his patience and, turning quickly, started to chase the boys, who ran away shouting *ba, be, bi, bo, bu*.1 Blind with rage and unable to catch them, he threw his cane and struck one of the boys on the head, knocking him down. He ran up and began to kick the fallen boy, and none of those who had been laughing had the courage to interfere. Unfortunately, your father happened to come along just at that time. He ran forward indignantly, caught the collector by the arm, and reprimanded him severely.

The artilleryman, who was no doubt beside himself with rage, raised his hand, but your father was too quick for him, and with the strength of a descendant of the Basques—some say that he struck him, others that he merely pushed him, but at any rate the man staggered and fell a little way off, striking his head against a stone. Don Rafael quietly picked the wounded boy up and carried him to the town hall. The artilleryman bled freely from the mouth and died a few moments later without recovering consciousness.

[30]"As was to be expected, the authorities intervened and arrested your father. All his hidden enemies at once rose up and false accusations came from all sides. He was accused of being a heretic and a filibuster. To be a heretic is a great danger anywhere, but especially so at that time when the province was governed by an alcalde who made a great show of his piety, who with his servants used to recite his rosary in the church in a loud voice, perhaps that all might hear and pray with him. But to be a filibuster is worse than to be a heretic and to kill three or four tax-collectors who know how to read, write, and attend to business. Every one abandoned him, and his books and papers were seized. He was accused of subscribing to *El Correo de Ultramar*, and to newspapers from Madrid, of having sent you to Germany, of having in his possession letters and a photograph of a priest who had been legally executed, and I don't know what not. Everything served as an accusation, even the fact that he, a descendant of Peninsulars, wore a camisa. Had it been any one but your father, it is likely that he would soon have been set free, as there was a physician who ascribed the death of the unfortunate collector to a hemorrhage. But his wealth, his confidence in the law, and his hatred of everything that was not legal and just, wrought his undoing. In spite of my repugnance to asking for mercy from any one, I applied personally to the Captain-General—the predecessor of our present one—and urged upon him that there could not be anything of the filibuster about a man who took up with all the Spaniards, even the poor emigrants, and gave them food and shelter, and in whose veins yet flowed the generous blood of Spain. It was in vain that I pledged my life and swore by my poverty and my military honor. I succeeded only in being coldly listened to and roughly sent away with the epithet of *chiflado*."[2]

[31]The old man paused to take a deep breath, and after noticing the silence of his companion, who was listening with averted face, continued: "At your

father's request I prepared the defense in the case. I went first to the celebrated Filipino lawyer, young A———, but he refused to take the case. 'I should lose it,' he told me, 'and my defending him would furnish the motive for another charge against him and perhaps one against me. Go to Señor M———, who is a forceful and fluent speaker and a Peninsular of great influence.' I did so, and the noted lawyer took charge of the case, and conducted it with mastery and brilliance. But your father's enemies were numerous, some of them hidden and unknown. False witnesses abounded, and their calumnies, which under other circumstances would have melted away before a sarcastic phrase from the defense, here assumed shape and substance. If the lawyer succeeded in destroying the force of their testimony by making them contradict each other and even perjure themselves, new charges were at once preferred. They accused him of having illegally taken possession of a great deal of land and demanded damages. They said that he maintained relations with the tulisanes in order that his crops and animals might not be molested by them. At last the case became so confused that at the end of a year no one understood it. The alcalde had to leave and there came in his place one who had the reputation of being honest, but unfortunately he stayed only a few months, and his successor was too fond of good horses.

"The sufferings, the worries, the hard life in the prison, or the pain of seeing so much ingratitude, broke your father's iron constitution and he fell ill with that malady which only the tomb can cure. When the case was almost finished and he was about to be acquitted of the charge of being an enemy of the fatherland and of being the murderer of the tax-collector, he died in the prison with no one at his side. I arrived just in time to see him breathe his last."

[32]The old lieutenant became silent, but still Ibarra said nothing. They had arrived meanwhile at the door of the barracks, so the soldier stopped and said, as he grasped the youth's hand, "Young man, for details ask Capitan Tiago. Now, good night, as I must return to duty and see that all's well."

Silently, but with great feeling, Ibarra shook the lieutenant's bony hand and followed him with his eyes until he disappeared. Then he turned slowly and signaled to a passing carriage. "To Lala's Hotel," was the direction he gave in a scarcely audible voice.

“This fellow must have just got out of jail,” thought the cochero as he whipped up his horses.[33]

1The syllables which constitute the first reading lesson in Spanish primers.—TR.

2A Spanish colloquial term (“cracked”), applied to a native of Spain who was considered to be mentally unbalanced from too long residence in the islands,—TR.

[Contents]

Chapter V
A Star in a Dark Night

Ibarra went to his room, which overlooked the river, and dropping into a chair gazed out into the vast expanse of the heavens spread before him through the open window. The house on the opposite bank was profusely lighted, and gay strains of music, largely from stringed instruments, were borne across the river even to his room.

If the young man had been less preoccupied, if he had had more curiosity and had cared to see with his opera glasses what was going on in that atmosphere of light, he would have been charmed with one of those magical and fantastic spectacles, the like of which is sometimes seen in the great theaters of Europe. To the subdued strains of the orchestra there seems to appear in the midst of a shower of light, a cascade of gold and diamonds in an Oriental setting, a deity wrapped in misty gauze, a sylph enveloped in a luminous halo, who moves forward apparently without touching the floor. In her presence the flowers bloom, the dance awakens, the music bursts forth, and troops of devils, nymphs, satyrs, demons, angels, shepherds and shepherdesses, dance, shake their tambourines, and whirl about in rhythmic evolutions, each one placing some tribute at the feet of the goddess. Ibarra would have seen a beautiful and graceful maiden, clothed in the picturesque garments of the daughters of the Philippines, standing in the center Of a semicircle made up of every class of people, Chinese, Spaniards, Filipinos, soldiers, curates, old men and young, all gesticulating and moving about in a lively manner. Padre Damaso stood at the side of the beauty, smiling like one especially blessed. Fray Sibyla—yes, Fray Sibyla[34]himself—was talking to her. Doña Victorina was arranging in the magnificent hair of the maiden a string of pearls and diamonds which threw out all the beautiful tints of the rainbow. She was white, perhaps too much so, and whenever she raised her downcast eyes there shone forth a spotless soul. When she smiled so as to show her small white teeth the beholder realized that the rose is only a flower and ivory but the elephant's tusk. From out the filmy piña draperies around her white and shapely neck there blinked, as the Tagalogs say, the bright eyes of a collar of diamonds. One man only in all the crowd seemed insensible to her radiant influence—a young Franciscan, thin,

wasted, and pale, who watched her from a distance, motionless as a statue and scarcely breathing.

But Ibarra saw nothing of all this—his eyes were fixed on other things. A small space was enclosed by four bare and grimy walls, in one of which was an iron grating. On the filthy and loathsome floor was a mat upon which an old man lay alone in the throes of death, an old man breathing with difficulty and turning his head from side to side as amid his tears he uttered a name. The old man was alone, but from time to time a groan or the rattle of a chain was heard on the other side of the wall. Far away there was a merry feast, almost an orgy; a youth was laughing, shouting, and pouring wine upon the flowers amid the applause and drunken laughter of his companions. The old man had the features of *his* father, the youth was himself, and the name that the old man uttered with tears was*his own* name! This was what the wretched young man saw before him. The lights in the house opposite were extinguished, the music and the noises ceased, but Ibarra still heard the anguished cry of his father calling upon his son in the hour of his death.

Silence had now blown its hollow breath over the city, and all things seemed to sleep in the embrace of nothingness. The cock-crow alternated with the strokes of the clocks in the church towers and the mournful cries of the weary [35]sentinels. A waning moon began to appear, and everything seemed to be at rest; even Ibarra himself, worn out by his sad thoughts or by his journey, now slept.

Only the young Franciscan whom we saw not so long ago standing motionless and silent in the midst of the gaiety of the ballroom slept not, but kept vigil. In his cell, with his elbow upon the window sill and his pale, worn cheek resting on the palm of his hand, he was gazing silently into the distance where a bright star glittered in the dark sky. The star paled and disappeared, the dim light of the waning moon faded, but the friar did not move from his place—he was gazing out over the field of Bagumbayan and the sleeping sea at the far horizon wrapped in the morning mist.[36]

[Contents]

Chapter VI
Capitan Tiago

Thy will be done on earth.

While our characters are deep in slumber or busy with their breakfasts, let us turn our attention to Capitan Tiago. We have never had the honor of being his guest, so it is neither our right nor our duty to pass him by slightingly, even under the stress of important events.

Low in stature, with a clear complexion, a corpulent figure and a full face, thanks to the liberal supply of fat which according to his admirers was the gift of Heaven and which his enemies averred was the blood of the poor, Capitan Tiago appeared to be younger than he really was; he might have been thought between thirty and thirty-five years of age. At the time of our story his countenance always wore a sanctified look; his little round head, covered with ebony-black hair cut long in front and short behind, was reputed to contain many things of weight; his eyes, small but with no Chinese slant, never varied in expression; his nose was slender and not at all inclined to flatness; and if his mouth had not been disfigured by the immoderate use of tobacco and buyo, which, when chewed and gathered in one cheek, marred the symmetry of his features, we would say that he might properly have considered himself a handsome man and have passed for such. Yet in spite of this bad habit he kept marvelously white both his natural teeth and also the two which the dentist furnished him at twelve pesos each.

He was considered one of the richest landlords in Binondo and a planter of some importance by reason of his [37]estates in Pampanga and Laguna, principally in the town of San Diego, the income from which increased with each year. San Diego, on account of its agreeable baths, its famous cockpit, and his cherished memories of the place, was his favorite town, so that he spent at least two months of the year there. His holdings of real estate in the city were large, and it is superfluous to state that the opium monopoly controlled by him and a Chinese brought in large profits. They also had the lucrative contract of feeding the prisoners in Bilibid and furnished zacate to many of the stateliest establishments in Manila u through the medium of contracts, of course. Standing well with all the authorities, clever, cunning,

and even bold in speculating upon the wants of others, he was the only formidable rival of a certain Perez in the matter of the farming-out of revenues and the sale of offices and appointments, which the Philippine government always confides to private persons. Thus, at the time of the events here narrated, Capitan Tiago was a happy man in so far as it is possible for a narrow-brained individual to be happy in such a land: he was rich, and at peace with God, the government, and men.

That he was at peace with God was beyond doubt,—almost like religion itself. There is no need to be on bad terms with the good God when one is prosperous on earth, when one has never had any direct dealings with Him and has never lent Him any money. Capitan Tiago himself had never offered any prayers to Him, even in his greatest difficulties, for he was rich and his gold prayed for him. For masses and supplications high and powerful priests had been created; for novenas and rosaries God in His infinite bounty had created the poor for the service of the rich—the poor who for a peso could be secured to recite sixteen mysteries and to read all the sacred books, even the Hebrew Bible, for a little extra. If at any time in the midst of pressing difficulties he needed celestial aid and had not at hand even a red Chinese taper, he would [38]call upon his most adored saints, promising them many things for the purpose of putting them under obligation to him and ultimately convincing them of the righteousness of his desires.

The saint to whom he promised the most, and whose promises he was the most faithful in fulfilling, was the Virgin of Antipolo, Our Lady of Peace and Prosperous Voyages.1 With many of the lesser saints he was not very punctual or even decent; and sometimes, after having his petitions granted, he thought no more about them, though of course after such treatment he did not bother them again, when occasion arose. Capitan Tiago knew that the calendar was full of idle saints who perhaps had nothing wherewith to occupy their time up there in heaven. Furthermore, to the Virgin of Antipolo he ascribed greater power and efficiency than to all the other Virgins combined, whether they carried silver canes, naked or richly clothed images of the Christ Child, scapularies, rosaries, or girdles. Perhaps this reverence was owing to the fact that she was a very strict Lady, watchful of her name, and, according to the senior sacristan of Antipolo, an enemy of photography. When she was angered she turned black as ebony, while [39]the other Virgins were softer of heart and more indulgent. It is a

well-known fact that some minds love an absolute monarch rather than a constitutional one, as witness Louis XIV and Louis XVI, Philip II and Amadeo I. This fact perhaps explains why infidel Chinese and even Spaniards may be seen kneeling in the famous sanctuary; what is not explained is why the priests run away with the money of the terrible Image, go to America, and get married there.

In the sala of Capitan Tiago's house, that door, hidden by a silk curtain leads to a small chapel or oratory such as must be lacking in no Filipino home. There were placed his household gods—and we say "gods" because he was inclined to polytheism rather than to monotheism, which he had never come to understand. There could be seen images of the Holy Family with busts and extremities of ivory, glass eyes, long eyelashes, and curly blond hair—masterpieces of Santa Cruz sculpture. Paintings in oil by artists of Paco and Ermita[2] represented martyrdoms of saints and miracles of the Virgin; St. Lucy gazing at the sky and carrying in a plate an extra pair of eyes with lashes and eyebrows, such as are seen painted in the triangle of the Trinity or on Egyptian tombs; St. Pascual Bailon;St. Anthony of Padua in a *guingón* habit looking with tears upon a Christ Child dressed as a Captain-General with the three-cornered hat, sword, and boots, as in the children's ball at Madrid that character is represented—which signified for Capitan Tiago that while God might include in His omnipotence the power of a Captain-General of the Philippines, the Franciscans would nevertheless play with Him as with a doll. There, might also be seen a St. Anthony the Abbot with a hog by his side, a hog that for the worthy Capitan was as miraculous as the saint himself, for which reason he never dared to refer to it as the *hog*, but as the *creature of holySt. Anthony*; a St. Francis [40]of Assisi in a coffee-colored robe and with seven wings, placed over a St. Vincent who had only two but in compensation carried a trumpet; a St. Peter the Martyr with his head split open by the talibon of an evil-doer and held fast by a kneeling infidel, side by side with another St. Peter cutting off the ear of a Moro, Malchus[3] no doubt, who was gnawing his lips and writhing with pain, while a fighting-cock on a doric column crowed and flapped his wings—from all of which Capitan Tiago deduced that in order to be a saint it was just as well to smite as to be smitten.

Who could enumerate that army of images and recount the virtues and perfections that were treasured there! A whole chapter would hardly suffice. Yet we must not pass over in silence a beautiful St. Michael of painted and

gilded wood almost four feet high. The Archangel is biting his lower lip and with flashing eyes, frowning forehead, and rosy cheeks is grasping a Greek shield and brandishing in his right hand a Sulu kris, ready, as would appear from his attitude and expression, to smite a worshiper or any one else who might approach, rather than the horned and tailed devil that had his teeth set in his girlish leg.

Capitan Tiago never went near this image from fear of a miracle. Had not other images, even those more rudely carved ones that issue from the carpenter shops of Paete,[4] many times come to life for the confusion and punishment of incredulous sinners? It is a well-known fact that a certain image of Christ in Spain, when invoked as a witness of promises of love, had assented with a movement of the head in the presence of the judge, and that another such image had reached out its right arm to embrace St. Lutgarda. And furthermore, had he not himself read a booklet recently published about a mimic sermon preached [41]by an image of St. Dominic in Soriano? True, the saint had not said a single word, but from his movements it was inferred, at any rate the author of the booklet inferred, that he was announcing the end of the world.[5] Was it not reported, too, that the Virgin of Luta in the town of Lipa had one cheek swollen larger than the other and that there was mud on the borders of her gown? Does not this prove mathematically that the holy images also walk about without holding up their skirts and that they even suffer from the toothache, perhaps for our sake? Had he not seen with his own eyes, during the regular Good-Friday sermon, all the images of Christ move and bow their heads thrice in unison, thereby calling forth wails and cries from the women and other sensitive souls destined for Heaven? More? We ourselves have seen the preacher show to the congregation at the moment of the descent from the cross a handkerchief stained with blood, and were ourselves on the point of weeping piously, when, to the sorrow of our soul, a sacristan assured us that it was all a joke, that the blood was that of a chicken which had been roasted and eaten on the spot in spite of the fact that it was Good Friday—and the sacristan was fat! So Capitan Tiago, even though he was a prudent and pious individual, took care not to approach the kris of St. Michael. “Let’s take no chances,” he would say to himself, “I know that he’s an archangel, but I don’t trust him, no, I don’t trust him.”

Not a year passed without his joining with an orchestra in the pilgrimage to the wealthy shrine of Antipolo. He paid for two thanksgiving masses of the many that make up the three novenas, and also for the days when there are no novenas, and washed himself afterwards in the famous *bátis*, or pool, where the sacred Image herself had bathed. Her votaries can even yet discern the tracks of her feet and the traces of her locks in the hard rock, where she dried them, resembling exactly those made by any [42]woman who uses coconut-oil, and just as if her hair had been steel or diamonds and she had weighed a thousand tons. We should like to see the terrible Image once shake her sacred hair in the eyes of those credulous persons and put her foot upon their tongues or their heads. There at the very edge of the pool Capitan Tiago made it his duty to eat roast pig, *sinigang* of *dalag* with *alibambang* leaves, and other more or less appetizing dishes. The two masses would cost him over four hundred pesos, but it was cheap, after all, if one considered the glory that the Mother of the Lord would acquire from the pin-wheels, rockets, bombs, and mortars, and also the increased profits which, thanks to these masses, would come to one during the year.

But Antipolo was not the only theater of his ostentatious devotion. In Binondo, in Pampanga, and in the town of San Diego, when he was about to put up a fighting-cock with large wagers, he would send gold moneys to the curate for propitiatory masses and, just as the Romans consulted the augurs before a battle, giving food to the sacred fowls, so Capitan Tiago would also consult his augurs, with the modifications befitting the times and the new truths, tie would watch closely the flame of the tapers, the smoke from the incense, the voice of the priest, and from it all attempt to forecast his luck. It was an admitted fact that he lost very few wagers, and in those cases it was due to the unlucky circumstance that the officiating priest was hoarse, or that the altar-candles were few or contained too much tallow, or that a bad piece of money had slipped in with the rest. The warden of the Brotherhood would then assure him that such reverses were tests to which he was subjected by Heaven to receive assurance of his fidelity and devotion. So, beloved by the priests, respected by the sacristans, humored by the Chinese chandlers and the dealers in fireworks, he was a man happy in the religion of this world, and persons of discernment and great piety even claimed for him great influence in the celestial court.

[43]That he was at peace with the government cannot be doubted, however difficult an achievement it may seem. Incapable of any new idea and satisfied with his *modus vivendi*, he was ever ready to gratify the desires of the last official of the fifth class in every one of the offices, to make presents of hams, capons, turkeys, and Chinese fruits at all seasons of the year. If he heard any one speak ill of the natives, he, who did not consider himself as such, would join in the chorus and speak worse of them; if any one aspersed the Chinese or Spanish mestizos, he would do the same, perhaps because he considered himself become a full-blooded Iberian. He was ever first to talk in favor of any new imposition of taxes, or special assessment, especially when he smelled a contract or a farming assignment behind it. He always had an orchestra ready for congratulating and serenading the governors, judges, and other officials on their name-days and birthdays, at the birth or death of a relative, and in fact at every variation from the usual monotony. For such occasions he would secure laudatory poems and hymns in which were celebrated "the kind and loving governor," "the brave and courageous judge for whom there awaits in heaven the palm of the just," with many other things of the same kind.

He was the president of the rich guild of mestizos in spite of the protests of many of them, who did not regard him as one of themselves. In the two years that he held this office he wore out ten frock coats, an equal number of high hats, and half a dozen canes. The frock coat and the high hat were in evidence at the Ayuntamiento, in the governor-general's palace, and at military headquarters; the high hat and the frock coat might have been noticed in the cockpit, in the market, in the processions, in the Chinese shops, and under the hat and within the coat might have been seen the perspiring Capitan Tiago, waving his tasseled cane, directing, arranging, and throwing everything into disorder with marvelous activity and a gravity even more marvelous.

[44]So the authorities saw in him a safe man, gifted with the best of dispositions, peaceful, tractable, and obsequious, who read no books or newspapers from Spain, although he spoke Spanish well. Indeed, they rather looked upon him with the feeling with which a poor student contemplates the worn-out heel of his old shoe, twisted by his manner of walking. In his case there was truth in both the Christian and profane proverbs *beati pauperes spiritu* and *beati possidentes*,6 and there might well

be applied to him that translation, according to some people incorrect, from the Greek, “Glory to God in the highest and peace to men of good-will on earth!” even though we shall see further along that it is not sufficient for men to have good-will in order to live in peace.

The irreverent considered him a fool, the poor regarded him as a heartless and cruel exploiter of misery and want, and his inferiors saw in him a despot and a tyrant. As to the women, ah, the women! Accusing rumors buzzed through the wretched nipa huts, and it was said that wails and sobs might be heard mingled with the weak cries of an infant. More than one young woman was pointed out by her neighbors with the finger of scorn: she had a downcast glance and a faded cheek. But such things never robbed him of sleep nor did any maiden disturb his peace. It was an old woman who made him suffer, an old woman who was his rival in piety and who had gained from many curates such enthusiastic praises and eulogies as he in his best days had never received.

Between Capitan Tiago and this widow, who had inherited from brothers and cousins, there existed a holy rivalry which redounded to the benefit of the Church as the competition among the Pampanga steamers then redounded to the benefit of the public. Did Capitan Tiago present to some Virgin a silver wand ornamented with emeralds and topazes? At once Doña Patrocinio had ordered another [45]of gold set with diamonds! If at the time of the Naval procession[7] Capitan Tiago erected an arch with two façades, covered with ruffled cloth and decorated with mirrors, glass globes, and chandeliers, then Doña Patrocinio would have another with four facades, six feet higher, and more gorgeous hangings. Then he would fall back on his reserves, his strong point, his specialty—masses with bombs and fireworks; whereat Doña Patrocinia could only gnaw at her lips with her toothless gums, because, being exceedingly nervous, she could not endure the chiming of the bells and still less the explosions of the bombs. While he smiled in triumph, she would plan her revenge and pay the money of others to secure the best orators of the five Orders in Manila, the most famous preachers of the Cathedral, and even the Paulists,[8] to preach on the holy days upon profound theological subjects to the sinners who understood only the vernacular of the mariners. The partizans of Capitan Tiago would observe that she slept during the sermon; but her adherents would answer that the sermon was paid for in advance, and by her, and that in any affair

payment was the prime requisite. At length, she had driven him from the field completely by presenting to the church three *andas* of gilded silver, each one of which cost her over three thousand pesos. Capitan Tiago hoped that the old woman would breathe her last almost any day, or that she would lose five or six of her lawsuits, so that he might be alone in serving God; but unfortunately the best lawyers of the *Real Audiencia* looked after her interests, and as to her health, there was no part of her that could be attacked by sickness; she seemed to be a steel wire, no [46]doubt for the edification of souls, and she hung on in this vale of tears with the tenacity of a boil on the skin. Her adherents were secure in the belief that she would be canonized at her death and that Capitan Tiago himself would have to worship her at the altars—all of which he agreed to and cheerfully promised, provided only that she die soon.

Such was Capitan Tiago in the days of which we write. As for the past, he was the only son of a sugar-planter of Malabon, wealthy enough, but so miserly that he would not spend a cent to educate his son, for which reason the little Santiago had been the servant of a good Dominican, a worthy man who had tried to train him in all of good that he knew and could teach. When he had reached the happy stage of being known among his acquaintances as a *logician*, that is, when he began to study logic, the death of his protector, soon followed by that of his father, put an end to his studies and he had to turn his attention to business affairs. He married a pretty young woman of Santa Cruz, who gave him social position and helped him to make his fortune. Doña Pia Alba was not satisfied with buying and selling sugar, indigo, and coffee, but wished to plant and reap, so the newly-married couple bought land in San Diego. From this time dated their friendship with Padre Damoso and with Don Rafael Ibarra, the richest capitalist of the town.

The lack of an heir in the first six years of their wedded life made of that eagerness to accumulate riches almost a censurable ambition. Doña Pia was comely, strong, and healthy, yet it was in vain that she offered novenas and at the advice of the devout women of San Diego made a pilgrimage to the Virgin of Kaysaysay[9] in Taal, distributed [47]alms to the poor, and danced at midday in May in the procession of the Virgin of Turumba[10] in Pakil. But it was all with no result until Fray Damaso advised her to go to Obando to dance in the fiesta of St. Pascual Bailon and ask him for a son. Now it is

well known that there is in Obando a trinity which grants sons or daughters according to request—Our Lady of Salambaw, St. Clara, and St. Pascual. Thanks to this wise advice, Doña Pia soon recognized the signs of approaching motherhood. But alas! like the fisherman of whom Shakespeare tells in *Macbeth*, who ceased to sing when he had found a treasure, she at once lost all her mirthfulness, fell into melancholy, and was never seen to smile again. "Capriciousness, [48]natural in her condition," commented all, even Capitan Tiago. A puerperal fever put an end to her hidden grief, and she died, leaving behind a beautiful girl baby for whom Fray Damaso himself stood sponsor. As St. Pascual had not granted the son that was asked, they gave the child the name of Maria Clara, in honor of the Virgin of Salambaw and St. Clara, punishing the worthySt. Pascual with silence.

The little girl grew up under the care of her aunt Isabel, that good old lady of monkish urbanity whom we met at the beginning of the story. For the most part, her early life was spent in San Diego, on account of its healthful climate, and there Padre Damaso was devoted to her.

Maria Clara had not the small eyes of her father; like her mother, she had eyes large, black, long-lashed, merry and smiling when she was playing but sad, deep, and pensive in moments of repose. As a child her hair was curly and almost blond, her straight nose was neither too pointed nor too flat, while her mouth with the merry dimples at the corners recalled the small and pleasing one of her mother, her skin had the fineness of an onion-cover and was white as cotton, according to her perplexed relatives, who found the traces of Capitan Tiago's paternity in her small and shapely ears. Aunt Isabel ascribed her half-European features to the longings of Doña Pia, whom she remembered to have seen many times weeping before the image of St. Anthony. Another cousin was of the same opinion, differing only in the choice of the smut, as for her it was either the Virgin herself or St. Michael. A famous philosopher, who was the cousin of Capitan Tinong and who had memorized the "Amat,"11 sought for the true explanation in planetary influences.

The idol of all, Maria Clara grew up amidst smiles and love. The very friars showered her with attentions when she appeared in the processions dressed in white, her [49]abundant hair interwoven with tuberoses and sampaguitas, with two diminutive wings of silver and gold fastened on the back of her

gown, and carrying in her hands a pair of white doves tied with blue ribbons. Afterwards, she would be so merry and talk so sweetly in her childish simplicity that the enraptured Capitan Tiago could do nothing but bless the saints of Obando and advise every one to purchase beautiful works of sculpture.

In southern countries the girl of thirteen or fourteen years changes into a woman as the bud of the night becomes a flower in the morning. At this period of change, so full of mystery and romance, Maria Clara was placed, by the advice of the curate of Binondo, in the nunnery of St. Catherine[12] in order to receive strict religious training from the Sisters. With tears she took leave of Padre Damaso and of the only lad who had been a friend of her childhood, Crisostomo Ibarra, who himself shortly afterward went away to Europe. There in that convent, which communicates with the world through double bars, even under the watchful eyes of the nuns, she spent seven years.

Each having his own particular ends in view and knowing the mutual inclinations of the two young persons, Don Rafael and Capitan Tiago agreed upon the marriage of their children and the formation of a business partnership. This agreement, which was concluded some years after the younger Ibarra's departure, was celebrated with equal joy by two hearts in widely separated parts of the world and under very different circumstances. [50]

[1]This celebrated Lady was first brought from Acapulco, Mexico, by Juan Niño de Tabora, when he came to govern the Philippines in 1626. By reason of her miraculous powers of allaying the storms she was carried back and forth in the state galleons on a number of voyages, until in 1672 she was formally installed in a church in the hills northeast of Manila, under the care of the Augustinian Fathers. While her shrine was building she is said to have appeared to the faithful in the top of a large breadfruit tree, which is known to the Tagalogs as "antipolo"; hence her name. Hers is the best known and most frequented shrine in the country, while she disputes with the Holy Child of Cebu the glory of being the wealthiest individual in the whole archipelago.

There has always existed a pious rivalry between her and the Dominicans' Lady of the Rosary as to which is the patron saint of the Philippines, the contest being at times complicated by counterclaims on the part of St. Francis, although the entire question would seem to have been definitely settled by a royal decree, published about 1650, officially conferring that honorable post upon St. Michael the Archangel (San Miguel). A rather irreverent sketch of this celebrated queen of the skies appears in Chapter XI of Foreman's *The Philippine Islands*.—TR.

[2]Santa Cruz, Paco, and Ermita are districts of Manila, outside the Walled City.—TR.

[3]John xviii. 10.

4A town in Laguna Province, noted for the manufacture of furniture.—TR.

5God grant that this prophecy may soon be fulfilled for the author of the booklet and all of us who believe it. Amen.—*Author's note*.

6"Blessed are the poor in spirit" and "blessed are the possessors."—TR.

7The annual celebration of the Dominican Order held in October in honor of its patroness, the Virgin of the Rosary, to whose intervention was ascribed the victory over a Dutch fleet in 1646, whence the name. See *Guía Oficial de Filipinas*, 1885, pp. 138, 139; Montero y Vidal, *Historia General de Filipinas*, Vol. I, Chap. XXIII; Blair and Robertson, *The Philippine Islands*, Vol. XXXV, pp. 249, 250.—TR.

8Members of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, whose chief business is preaching and teaching. They entered the Philippines in 1862.—TR.

9"Kaysaysay: A celebrated sanctuary in the island of Luzon, province of Batangas, jurisdiction, of Taal, so called because there is venerated in it a Virgin who bears that name ....

"The image is in the center of the high altar, where there is seen an eagle in half-relief, whose abdomen is left open in order to afford a tabernacle for the Virgin: an idea enchanting to many of the Spaniards [47n]established in the Philippines during the last century, but which in our opinion any sensible person will characterize as extravagant.

"This image of the Virgin of Kaysaysay enjoys the fame of being very miraculous, so that the Indians gather from great distances to hear mass in her sanctuary every Saturday. Her discovery, over two and a half centuries ago, is notable in that she was found in the sea during some fisheries, coming up in a drag-net with the fish. It is thought that this venerable image of the Filipinos may have been in some ship which was wrecked and that the currents carried her up to the coast, where she was found in the manner related.

"The Indians, naturally credulous and for the most part quite superstitious, in spite of the advancements in civilization and culture, relate that she appeared afterwards in some trees, and in memory of these manifestations an arch representing them was erected at a short distance from the place where her sanctuary is now located."—Buzeta and Bravo's *Diccionario*, Madrid, 1850, but copied "with proper modifications for the times and the new truths" from Zuñiga's *Estadismo*, which, though written in 1803 and not published until 1893, was yet used by later writers, since it was preserved in manuscript in the convent of the Augustinians in Manila, Buzeta and Bravo, as well as Zuñiga, being members of that order.

So great was the reverence for this Lady that the Acapulco galleons on their annual voyages were accustomed to fire salutes in her honor as they passed along the coast near her shrine.—Foreman. *The Philippine Islands*, quoting from the account of an eruption of Taal Volcano in 1749, by Fray Francisco Vencuchillo.

This Lady's sanctuary, where she is still "enchanting" in her "eagle in half-relief," stands out prominently on the hill above the town of Taal, plainly visible from Balayan Bay.—TR.

10A Tagalog term meaning "to tumble," or "to caper about," doubtless from the actions of the Lady's devotees. Pakil is a town in Laguna Province.—TR.

11A work on scholastic philosophy, by a Spanish prelate of that name.—TR.

12The nunnery and college of St. Catherine of Sienna ("Santa Catalina de la Sena") was founded by the Dominican Fathers in 1696.—TR.

[Contents]

Chapter VIII
An Idyl on an Azotea

The Song of Songs, which is Solomon's.

That morning Aunt Isabel and Maria Clara went early to mass, the latter elegantly dressed and wearing a rosary of blue beads, which partly served as a bracelet for her, and the former with her spectacles in order to read her *Anchor of Salvation* during the holy communion. Scarcely had the priest disappeared from the altar when the maiden expressed a desire for returning home, to the great surprise and displeasure of her good aunt, who believed her niece to be as pious and devoted to praying as a nun, at least. Grumbling and crossing herself, the good old lady rose. "The good Lord will forgive me, Aunt Isabel, since He must know the hearts of girls better than you do," Maria Clara might have said to check the severe yet maternal chidings.

After they had breakfasted, Maria Clara consumed her impatience in working at a silk purse while her aunt was trying to clean up the traces of the former night's revelry by swinging a feather duster about. Capitan Tiago was busy looking over some papers. Every noise in the street, every carriage that passed, caused the maiden to tremble and quickened the beatings of her heart. Now she wished that she were back in the quiet convent among her friends; there she could have seen him without emotion and agitation! But was he not the companion of her infancy, had they not played together and even quarreled at times? The reason for all this I need not explain; if you, O reader, have ever loved, you will understand; and if you [51]have not, it is useless for me to tell you, as the uninitiated do not comprehend these mysteries.

"I believe, Maria, that the doctor is right," said Capitan Tiago. "You ought to go into the country, for you are pale and need fresh air. What do you think of Malabon or San Diego?" At the mention of the latter place Maria Clara blushed like a poppy and was unable to answer.

"You and Isabel can go at once to the convent to get your clothes and to say good-by to your friends," he continued, without raising his head. "You will not stay there any longer."

The girl felt the vague sadness that possesses the mind when we leave forever a place where we have been happy, but another thought softened this sorrow.

“In four or five days, after you get some new clothes made, we’ll go to Malabon. Your godfather is no longer in San Diego. The priest that you may have noticed here last night, that young padre, is the new curate whom we have there, and he is a saint.”

“I think that San Diego would be better, cousin,” observed Aunt Isabel. “Besides, our house there is better and the time for the fiesta draws near.”

Maria Clara wanted to embrace her aunt for this speech, but hearing a carriage stop, she turned pale.

“Ah, very true,” answered Capitan Tiago, and then in a different tone he exclaimed, “Don Crisostomo!”

The maiden let her sewing fall from her hands and wished to move but could not—a violent tremor ran through her body. Steps were heard on the stairway and then a fresh, manly voice. As if that voice had some magic power, the maiden controlled her emotion and ran to hide in the oratory among the saints. The two cousins laughed, and Ibarra even heard the noise of the door closing. Pale and breathing rapidly, the maiden pressed her beating heart and tried to listen. She heard his voice, that beloved voice that for so long a time she had heard only in her dreams he was asking for her! Overcome with joy, she kissed [52]the nearest saint, which happened to beSt. Anthony the Abbot, a saint happy in flesh and in wood, ever the object of pleasing temptations! Afterwards she sought the keyhole in order to see and examine him. She smiled, and when her aunt snatched her from that position she unconsciously threw her arms around the old lady’s neck and rained kisses upon her.

“Foolish child, what’s the matter with you?” the old lady was at last able to say as she wiped a tear from her faded eyes. Maria Clara felt ashamed and covered her eyes with her plump arm.

“Come on, get ready, come!” added the old aunt fondly. “While he is talking to your father about you. Come, don’t make him wait.” Like a child the maiden obediently followed her and they shut themselves up in her chamber.

Capitan Tiago and Ibarra were conversing in a lively manner when Aunt Isabel appeared half dragging her niece, who was looking in every direction except toward the persons in the room.

What said those two souls communicating through the language of the eyes, more perfect than that of the lips, the language given to the soul in order that sound may not mar the ecstasy of feeling? In such moments, when the thoughts of two happy beings penetrate into each other's souls through the eyes, the spoken word is halting, rude, and weak—it is as the harsh, slow roar of the thunder compared with the rapidity of the dazzling lightning flash, expressing feelings already recognized, ideas already understood, and if words are made use of it is only because the heart's desire, dominating all the being and flooding it with happiness, wills that the whole human organism with all its physical and psychical powers give expression to the song of joy that rolls through the soul. To the questioning glance of love, as it flashes out and then conceals itself, speech has no reply; the smile, the kiss, the sigh answer.

[53]Soon the two lovers, fleeing from the dust raised by Aunt Isabel's broom, found themselves on the azotea where they could commune in liberty among the little arbors. What did they tell each other in murmurs that you nod your heads, O little red cypress flowers? Tell it, you who have fragrance in your breath and color on your lips. And thou, O zephyr, who learnest rare harmonies in the stillness of the dark night amid the hidden depths of our virgin forests! Tell it, O sunbeams, brilliant manifestation upon earth of the Eternal, sole immaterial essence in a material world, you tell it, for I only know how to relate prosaic commonplaces. But since you seem unwilling to do so, I am going to try myself.

The sky was blue and a fresh breeze, not yet laden with the fragrance of roses, stirred the leaves and flowers of the vines; that is why the cypresses, the orchids, the dried fishes, and the Chinese lanterns were trembling. The splash of paddles in the muddy waters of the river and the rattle of carriages and carts passing over the Binondo bridge came up to them distinctly, although they did not hear what the old aunt murmured as she saw where they were: "That's better, there you'll be watched by the whole neighborhood." At first they talked nonsense, giving utterance only to those sweet inanities which are so much like the boastings of the nations of

Europe—pleasing and honey-sweet at home, but causing foreigners to laugh or frown.

She, like a sister of Cain, was of course jealous and asked her sweetheart, "Have you always thought of me? Have you never forgotten me on all your travels in the great cities among so many beautiful women?"

He, too, was a brother of Cain, and sought to evade such questions, making use of a little fiction. "Could I forget you?" he answered as he gazed enraptured into her dark eyes. "Could I be faithless to my oath, my sacred oath? Do you remember that stormy night when you saw me weeping alone by the side of my dead mother and, drawing [54]near to me, you put your hand on my shoulder, that hand which for so long a time you had not allowed me to touch, saying to me, 'You have lost your mother while I never had one,' and you wept with me? You loved her and she looked upon you as a daughter. Outside it rained and the lightning flashed, but within I seemed to hear music and to see a smile on the pallid face of the dead. Oh, that my parents were alive and might behold you now! I then caught your hand along with the hand of my mother and swore to love you and to make you happy, whatever fortune Heaven might have in store for me; and that oath, which has never weighed upon me as a burden, I now renew!

"Could I forget you? The thought of you has ever been with me, strengthening me amid the dangers of travel, and has been a comfort to my soul's loneliness in foreign lands. The thoughts of you have neutralized the lotus-effect of Europe, which erases from the memories of so many of our countrymen the hopes and misfortunes of our fatherland. In dreams I saw you standing on the shore at Manila, gazing at the far horizon wrapped in the warm light of the early dawn. I heard the slow, sad song that awoke in me sleeping affections and called back to the memory of my heart the first years of our childhood, our joys, our pleasures, and all that happy past which you gave life to while you were in our town. It seemed to me that you were the fairy, the spirit, the poetic incarnation of my fatherland, beautiful, unaffected, lovable, frank, a true daughter of the Philippines, that beautiful land which unites with the imposing virtues of the mother country, Spain, the admirable qualities of a young people, as you unite in your being all that is beautiful and lovely, the inheritance of both races" so indeed the love of you and that of my fatherland have become fused into one.

“Could I forget you? Many times have I thought that I heard the sound of your piano and the accents of your voice. When in Germany, as I wandered at twilight [55]in the woods, peopled with the fantastic creations of its poets and the mysterious legends of past generations, always I called upon your name, imagining that I saw you in the mists that rose from the depths of the valley, or I fancied that I heard your voice in the rustling of the leaves. When from afar I heard the songs of the peasants as they returned from their labors, it seemed to me that their tones harmonized with my inner voices, that they were singing for *you*, and thus they lent reality to my illusions and dreams. At times I became lost among the mountain paths and while the night descended slowly, as it does there, I would find myself still wandering, seeking my way among the pines and beeches and oaks. Then when some scattering rays of moonlight slipped down into the clear spaces left in the dense foliage, I seemed to see you in the heart of the forest as a dim, loving shade wavering about between the spots of light and shadow. If perhaps the nightingale poured forth his varied trills, I fancied it was because he saw you and was inspired by you.

“Have I thought of you? The fever of love not only gave warmth to the snows but colored the ice! The beautiful skies of Italy with their clear depths reminded me of your eyes, its sunny landscape spoke to me of your smile; the plains of Andalusia with their scent-laden airs, peopled with oriental memories, full of romance and color, told me of your love! On dreamy, moonlit nights, while boating oil the Rhine, I have asked myself if my fancy did not deceive me as I saw you among the poplars on the banks, on the rocks of the Lorelei, or in the midst of the waters, singing in the silence of the night as if you were a comforting fairy maiden sent to enliven the solitude and sadness of those ruined castles!”

“I have not traveled like you, so I know only your town and Manila and Antipolo,” she answered with a smile which showed that she believed all he said. “But since I said good-by to you and entered the convent, I have always thought of you and have only put you out of my mind [56]when ordered to do so by my confessor, who imposed many penances upon me. I recalled our games and our quarrels when we were children. You used to pick up the most beautiful shells and search in the river for the roundest and smoothest pebbles of different colors that we might play games with them. You were very stupid and always lost, and by way of a forfeit I would slap

you with the palm of my hand, but I always tried not to strike you hard, for I had pity on you. In those games you cheated much, even more than I did, and we used to finish our play in a quarrel. Do you remember that time when you became really angry at me? Then you made me suffer, but afterwards, when I thought of it in the convent, I smiled and longed for you so that we might quarrel again—so that we might once more make up. We were still children and had gone with your mother to bathe in the brook under the shade of the thick bamboo. On the banks grew many flowers and plants whose strange names you told me in Latin and Spanish, for you were even then studying in the Ateneo.1 I paid no attention, but amused myself by running after the needle-like dragon-flies and the butterflies with their rainbow colors and tints of mother-of-pearl as they swarmed about among the flowers. Sometimes I tried to surprise them with my hands or to catch the little fishes that slipped rapidly about amongst the moss and stones in the edge of the water. Once you disappeared suddenly and when you returned you brought a crown of leaves and orange blossoms, which you placed upon my head, calling me Chloe. For yourself you made one of vines. But your mother snatched away my crown, and after mashing it with a stone mixed it with the *gogo* with which she was going to wash our heads. The tears came into your eyes and you said that she did not understand mythology. 'Silly boy,' your mother exclaimed, 'you'll [57]see how sweet your hair will smell afterwards.' I laughed, but you were offended and would not talk with me, and for the rest of the day appeared so serious that then I wanted to cry. On our way back to the town through the hot sun, I picked some sage leaves that grew beside the path and gave them to you to put in your hat so that you might not get a headache. You smiled and caught my hand, and we made up."

Ibarra smiled with happiness as he opened his pocketbook and took from it a piece of paper in which were wrapped some dry, blackened leaves which gave off a sweet odor. "Your sage leaves," he said, in answer to her inquiring look. "This is all that you have ever given me."

She in turn snatched from her bosom a little pouch of white satin. "You must not touch this," she said, tapping the palm of his hand lightly. "It's a letter of farewell."

"The one I wrote to you before leaving?"

“Have you ever written me any other, sir?”

“And what did I say to you then?”

“Many fibs, excuses of a delinquent debtor,” she answered smilingly, thus giving him to understand how sweet to her those fibs were. “Be quiet now and I’ll read it to you. I’ll leave out your fine phrases in order not to make a martyr of you.”

Raising the paper to the height of her eyes so that the youth might not see her face, she began: “‘*My*’—but I’ll not read what follows that because it’s not true.”

Her eyes ran along some lines.

“‘My father wishes me to go away, in spite of all my pleadings. ‘You are a man now,’ he told me, ‘and you must think about your future and about your duties. You must learn the science of life, a thing which your fatherland cannot teach you, so that you may some day be useful to it. If you remain here in my shadow, in this environment of business affairs, you will not learn to look far ahead. The day in which you lose me you will find yourself like the plant of which our poet Baltazar tells: grown in the water, its leaves wither at the least scarcity of moisture [58]and a moment’s heat dries it up. Don’t you understand? You are almost a young man, and yet you weep!’ These reproaches hurt me and I confessed that I loved you. My father reflected for a time in silence and then, placing his hand on my shoulder, said in a trembling voice, ‘Do you think that you alone know how to love, that your father does not love you, and that he will not feel the separation from you? It is only a short time since we lost your mother, and I must journey on alone toward old age, toward the very time of life when I would seek help and comfort from your youth, yet I accept my loneliness, hardly knowing whether I shall ever see you again. But you must think of other and greater things; the future lies open before you, while for me it is already passing behind; your love is just awakening, while mine is dying; fire burns in your blood, while the chill is creeping into mine. Yet you weep and cannot sacrifice the present for the future, useful as it may be alike to yourself and to your country.’ My father’s eyes filled with tears and I fell upon my knees at his feet, I embraced him, I begged his forgiveness, and I assured him that I was ready to set out—’”

Ibarra's growing agitation caused her to suspend the reading, for he had grown pale and was pacing back and forth.

"What's the matter? What is troubling you?" she asked him.

"You have almost made me forget that I have my duties, that I must leave at once for the town. Tomorrow is the day for commemorating the dead."

Maria Clara silently fixed her large dreamy eyes upon him for a few moments and then, picking some flowers, she said with emotion, "Go, I won't detain you longer! In a few days we shall see each other again. Lay these flowers on the tomb of your parents."

A few moments later the youth descended the stairway accompanied by Capitan Tiago and Aunt Isabel, while Maria Clara shut herself up in the oratory.

"Please tell Andeng to get the house ready, as Maria and Isabel are coming. A pleasant journey!" said Capitan [59]Tiago as Ibarra stepped into the carriage, which at once started in the direction of the plaza of San Gabriel. Afterwards, by way of consolation, her father said to Maria Clara, who was weeping beside an image of the Virgin, "Come, light two candles worth two reals each, one to St. Roch,2 and one to St. Raphael, the protector of travelers. Light the lamp of Our Lady of Peace and Prosperous Voyages, since there are so many tulisanes. It's better to spend four reals for wax and six cuartos for oil now than to pay a big ransom later."[60]

1The "Ateneo Municipal," where the author, as well as nearly every other Filipino of note in the past generation, received his early education, was founded by the Jesuits shortly after their return to the islands in 1859.—TR.

2The patron saint of Tondo, Manila's Saint-Antoine. He is invoked for aid in driving away plagues,—TR.

[Contents]

Chapter VIII
Recollections

Ibarra's carriage was passing through a part of the busiest district in Manila, the same which the night before had made him feel sad, but which by daylight caused him to smile in spite of himself. The movement in every part, so many carriages coming and going at full speed, the carromatas and calesas, the Europeans, the Chinese, the natives, each in his own peculiar costume, the fruit-venders, the money-changers, the naked porters, the grocery stores, the lunch stands and restaurants, the shops, and even the carts drawn by the impassive and indifferent carabao, who seems to amuse himself in carrying burdens while he patiently ruminates, all this noise and confusion, the very sun itself, the distinctive odors and the motley colors, awoke in the youth's mind a world of sleeping recollections.

Those streets had not yet been paved, and two successive days of sunshine filled them with dust which covered everything and made the passer-by cough while it nearly blinded him. A day of rain formed pools of muddy water, which at night reflected the carriage lights and splashed mud a distance of several yards away upon the pedestrians on the narrow sidewalks. And how many women have left their embroidered slippers in those waves of mud!

Then there might have been seen repairing those streets the lines of convicts with their shaven heads, dressed in short-sleeved camisas and pantaloons that reached only to their knees, each with his letter and number in blue. On their legs were chains partly wrapped in dirty rags to [61]ease the chafing or perhaps the chill of the iron. Joined two by two, scorched in the sun, worn out by the heat and fatigue, they were lashed and goaded by a whip in the hands of one of their own number, who perhaps consoled himself with this power of maltreating others. They were tall men with somber faces, which he had never seen brightened with the light of a smile. Yet their eyes gleamed when the whistling lash fell upon their shoulders or when a passer-by threw them the chewed and broken stub of a cigar, which the nearest would snatch up and hide in his salakot, while the rest remained gazing at the passers-by with strange looks.

The noise of the stones being crushed to fill the puddles and the merry clank of the heavy fetters on the swollen ankles seemed to remain with Ibarra. He shuddered as he recalled a scene that had made a deep impression on his childish imagination. It was a hot afternoon, and the burning rays of the sun fell perpendicularly upon a large cart by the side of which was stretched out one of those unfortunates, lifeless, yet with his eyes half opened. Two others were silently preparing a bamboo bier, showing no signs of anger or sorrow or impatience, for such is the character attributed to the natives: today it is you, tomorrow it will be I, they say to themselves. The people moved rapidly about without giving heed, women came up and after a look of curiosity continued unconcerned on their way—it was such a common sight that their hearts had become callous. Carriages passed, flashing back from their varnished sides the rays of the sun that burned in a cloudless sky. Only he, a child of eleven years and fresh from the country, was moved, and to him alone it brought bad dreams on the following night.

There no longer existed the useful and honored *Puente de Barcas*, the good Filipino pontoon bridge that had done its best to be of service in spite of its natural imperfections and its rising and falling at the caprice of the Pasig, which had more than once abused it and finally destroyed [62]it. The almond trees in the plaza of San Gabriel[1] had not grown; they were still in the same feeble and stunted condition. The Escolta appeared less beautiful in spite of the fact that an imposing building with caryatids carved on its front now occupied the place of the old row of shops. The new Bridge of Spain caught his attention, while the houses on the right bank of the river among the clumps of bamboo and trees where the Escolta ends and the Isla de Romero begins, reminded him of the cool mornings when he used to pass there in a boat on his way to the baths of Uli-Uli.

He met many carriages, drawn by beautiful pairs of dwarfish ponies, within which were government clerks who seemed yet half asleep as they made their way to their offices, or military officers, or Chinese in foolish and ridiculous attitudes, or Gave friars and canons. In an elegant victoria he thought he recognized Padre Damaso, grave and frowning, but he had already passed. Now he was pleasantly greeted by Capitan Tinong, who was passing in a carretela with his wife and two daughters.

As they went down off the bridge the horses broke into a trot along the Sabana Drive.2 On the left the Arroceros Cigar Factory resounded with the noise of the cigar-makers pounding the tobacco leaves, and Ibarra was unable to restrain a smile as he thought of the strong odor which about five o'clock in the afternoon used to float all over the *Puente de Barcas* and which had made him sick when he was a child. The lively conversations and the repartee of the crowds from the cigar factories carried him back to the district of Lavapiés in Madrid, with its riots of cigar-makers, so fatal for the unfortunate policemen.

The Botanical Garden drove away these agreeable recollections; the demon of comparison brought before his mind the Botanical Gardens of Europe, in countries where great, labor and much money are needed to make a single [63]leaf grow or one flower open its calyx; he recalled those of the colonies, where they are well supplied and tended, and all open to the public. Ibarra turned away his gaze toward the old Manila surrounded still by its walls and moats like a sickly girl wrapped in the garments of her grandmother's better days.

Then the sight of the sea losing itself in the distance! "On the other shore lies Europe," thought the young man,—"Europe, with its attractive peoples in constant movement in the search for happiness, weaving their dreams in the morning and disillusioning themselves at the setting of the sun, happy even in the midst of their calamities. Yes, on the farther shore of the boundless sea are the really spiritual nations, those who, even though they put no restraints on material development, are still more spiritual than those who pride themselves on adoring only the spirit!"

But these musings were in turn banished from his mind as he came in sight of the little mound in Bagumbayan Field.3 This isolated knoll at the side of the Luneta now caught his attention and made him reminiscent. He thought of the man who had awakened his intellect and made him understand goodness and justice. The ideas which that man had impressed upon him were not many, to be sure, but they were not meaningless repetitions, they were convictions which had not paled in the light of the most brilliant foci of progress. That man was an old priest whose words of farewell still resounded in his ears: "Do [64]not forget that if knowledge is the heritage of mankind, it is only the courageous who inherit it," he had reminded him. "I have tried to pass on to you what I got from my teachers, the sum of which I

have endeavored to increase and transmit to the coming generation as far as in me lay. You will now do the same for those who come after you, and you can treble it, since you are going to rich countries." Then he had added with a smile, "They come here seeking wealth, go you to their country to seek also that other wealth which we lack! But remember that all that glitters is not gold." The old man had died on that spot.
At these recollections the youth murmured audibly: "No, in spite of everything, the fatherland first, first the Philippines, the child of Spain, first the Spanish fatherland! No, that which is decreed by fate does not tarnish the honor of the fatherland, no!"

He gave little heed to Ermita, the phenix of nipa that had rearisen from its ashes under the form of blue and white houses with red-painted roofs of corrugated iron. Nor was his attention caught by Malate, neither by the cavalry barracks with the spreading trees in front, nor by the inhabitants or their little nipa huts, pyramidal or prismatic in shape, hidden away among the banana plants and areca palms, constructed like nests by each father of a family.

The carriage continued on its way, meeting now and then carromatas drawn by one or two ponies whose abaka harness indicated that they were from the country. The drivers would try to catch a glimpse of the occupant of the fine carriage, but would pass on without exchanging a word, without a single salute. At times a heavy cart drawn by a slow and indifferent carabao would appear on the dusty road over which beat the brilliant sunlight of the tropics. The mournful and monotonous song of the driver mounted on the back of the carabao would be mingled at one time with the screechings of a dry wheel on the huge axle of the heavy vehicle or at another time with [65]the dull scraping of worn-out runners on a sledge which was dragged heavily through the dust, and over the ruts in the road. In the fields and wide meadows the herds were grazing, attended ever by the white buffalo-birds which roosted peacefully on the backs of the animals while these chewed their cuds or browsed in lazy contentment upon the rich grass. In the distance ponies frisked, jumping and running about, pursued by the lively colts with long tails and abundant manes who whinnied and pawed the ground with their hard hoofs.
Let us leave the youth dreaming or dozing, since neither the sad nor the animated poetry of the open country held his attention. For him there was

no charm in the sun that gleamed upon the tops of the trees and caused the rustics, with feet burned by the hot ground in spite of their callousness, to hurry along, or that made the villager pause beneath the shade of an almond tree or a bamboo brake while he pondered upon vague and inexplicable things. While the youth's carriage sways along like a drunken thing on account of the inequalities in the surface of the road when passing over a bamboo bridge or going up an incline or descending a steep slope, let us return to Manila.[66]

1Now Plaza Cervantes.—TR.

2Now Plaza Lawton and Bagumbayan; see note, *infra*.— TR.

3The Field of Bagumbayan, adjoining the Luneta, was the place where political prisoners were shot or garroted, and was the scene of the author's execution on December 30, 1906. It is situated just outside and east of the old Walled City (Manila proper), being the location to which the natives who had occupied the site of Manila moved their town after having been driven back by the Spaniards—hence the name, which is a Tagalog compound meaning "new town." This place is now called Wallace Field, the name Bagumbayan being applied to the driveway which was known to the Spaniards as the *Paseo de las Aguadas*, or *de Vidal*, extending from the Luneta to the Bridge of Spain, just outside the moat that, formerly encircled the Walled City.—TR.

[Contents]

Chapter IX
Local Affairs

Ibarra had not been mistaken about the occupant of the victoria, for it was indeed Padre Damaso, and he was on his way to the house which the youth had just left.

“Where are you going?” asked the friar of Maria Clara and Aunt Isabel, who were about to enter a silver-mounted carriage. In the midst of his preoccupation Padre Damaso stroked the maiden’s cheek lightly.

“To the convent to get my things,” answered the latter.

“Ahaa! Aha! We’ll see who’s stronger, we’ll see,” muttered the friar abstractedly, as with bowed head and slow step he turned to the stairway, leaving the two women not a little amazed.

“He must have a sermon to preach and is memorizing it,” commented Aunt Isabel. “Get in, Maria, or we’ll be late.”

Whether or not Padre Damaso was preparing a sermon we cannot say, but it is certain that some grave matter filled his mind, for he did not extend his hand to Capitan Tiago, who had almost to get down on his knees to kiss it.

“Santiago,” said the friar at once, “I have an important matter to talk to you about. Let’s go into your office.”

Capitan Tiago began to feel uneasy, so much so that he did not know what to say; but he obeyed, following the heavy figure of the priest, who closed the door behind him.

While they confer in secret, let us learn what Fray [67]Sibyla has been doing. The astute Dominican is not at the rectory, for very soon after celebrating mass he had gone to the convent of his order, situated just inside the gate of Isabel II, or of Magellan, according to what family happened to be reigning in Madrid. Without paying any attention to the rich odor of chocolate, or to the rattle of boxes and coins which came from the treasury, and scarcely acknowledging the respectful and deferential salute of the procurator-brother, he entered, passed along several corridors, and knocked at a door.
“Come in,” sighed a weak voice.

“May God restore health to your Reverence,” was the young Dominican’s greeting as he entered.

Seated in a large armchair was an aged priest, wasted and rather sallow, like the saints that Rivera painted. His eyes were sunken in their hollow sockets, over which his heavy eyebrows were almost always contracted, thus accentuating their brilliant gleam. Padre Sibyla, with his arms crossed under the venerable scapulary of St. Dominic, gazed at him feelingly, then bowed his head and waited in silence.

“Ah,” sighed the old man, “they advise an operation, an operation, Hernando, at my age! This country, O this terrible country! Take warning from my ease, Hernando!”

Fray Sibyla raised his eyes slowly and fixed them on the sick man’s face. “What has your Reverence decided to do?” he asked.

“To die! Ah, what else can I do? I am suffering too much, but—I have made many suffer, I am paying my debt! And how are you? What has brought you here?”

“I’ve come to talk about the business which you committed to my care.”

“Ah! What about it?”

“Pish!” answered the young man disgustedly, as he seated himself and turned away his face with a contemptuous [68]expression, “They’ve been telling us fairy tales. Young Ibarra is a youth of discernment; he doesn’t seem to be a fool, but I believe that he is a good lad.”
“You believe so?”

“Hostilities began last night.”

“Already? How?”

Fray Sibyla then recounted briefly what had taken place between Padre Damaso and Ibarra. “Besides,” he said in conclusion, “the young man is going to marry Capitan Tiago’s daughter, who was educated in the college of our Sisterhood. He’s rich, and won’t care to make enemies and to run the risk of ruining his fortune and his happiness.”

The sick man nodded in agreement. “Yes, I think as you do. With a wife like that and such a father-in-law, we’ll own him body and soul. If not, so much the better for him to declare himself an enemy of ours.”

Fray Sibyla looked at the old man in surprise.

“For the good of our holy Order, I mean, of course,” he added, breathing heavily. “I prefer open attacks to the silly praises and flatteries of friends, which are really paid for.”

“Does your Reverence think—”

The old man regarded him sadly. “Keep it clearly before you,” he answered, gasping for breath. “Our power will last as long as it is believed in. If they attack us, the government will say, ‘They attack them because they see in them an obstacle to their liberty, so then let us preserve them.’”

“But if it should listen to them? Sometimes the government—”

“It will not listen!”

“Nevertheless, if, led on by cupidity, it should come to wish for itself what we are taking in—if there should be some bold and daring one—”

“Then woe unto that one!”

Both remained silent for a time, then the sick man continued: [69]“Besides, we need their attacks, to keep us awake; that makes us see our weaknesses so that we may remedy them. Exaggerated flattery will deceive us and put us to sleep, while outside our walls we shall be laughed at, and the day in which we become an object of ridicule, we shall fall as we fell in Europe. Money will not flow into our churches, no one will buy our scapularies or girdles or anything else, and when we cease to be rich we shall no longer be able to control consciences.”
“But we shall always have our estates, our property.”

“All will be lost as we lost them in Europe! And the worst of it is that we are working toward our own ruin. For example, this unrestrained eagerness to raise arbitrarily the rents on our lands each year, this eagerness which I have so vainly combated in all the chapters, this will ruin us! The native sees himself obliged to purchase farms in other places, which bring him as

good returns as ours, or better. I fear that we are already on the decline; *quos vult perdere Jupiter dementat prius*.1 For this reason we should not increase our burden; the people are already murmuring. You have decided well: let us leave the others to settle their accounts in that quarter; let us preserve the prestige that remains to us, and as we shall soon appear before God, let us wash our hands of it—and may the God of mercy have pity on our weakness!"

"So your Reverence thinks that the rent or tax—"

"Let's not talk any more about money," interrupted the sick man with signs of disgust. "You say that the lieutenant threatened to Padre Damaso that—"

"Yes, Padre," broke in Fray Sibyla with a faint smile, "but this morning I saw him and he told me that he was sorry for what occurred last night, that the sherry had gone to his head, and that he believed that Padre Damaso was in the same condition. 'And your threat?' I asked him jokingly. 'Padre,' he answered me, 'I know how to keep my word when my honor is affected, but I am not nor have [70]ever been an informer—for that reason I wear only two stars.'"
After they had conversed a while longer on unimportant subjects, Fray Sibyla took his departure.

It was true that the lieutenant had not gone to the Palace, but the Captain-General heard what had occurred. While talking with some of his aides about the allusions that the Manila newspapers were making to him under the names of comets and celestial apparitions, one of them told him about the affair of Padre Damaso, with a somewhat heightened coloring although substantially correct as to matter.

"From whom did you learn this?" asked his Excellency, smiling.

"From Laruja, who was telling it this morning in the office."

The Captain-General again smiled and said: "A woman or a friar can't insult one. I contemplate living in peace for the time that I shall remain in this country and I don't want any more quarrels with men who wear skirts. Besides, I've learned that the Provincial has scoffed at my orders. I asked for the removal of this friar as a punishment and they transferred him to a better town 'monkish tricks,' as we say in Spain."

But when his Excellency found himself alone he stopped smiling. “Ah, if this people were not so stupid, I would put a curb on their Reverences,” he sighed to himself. “But every people deserves its fate, so let’s do as everybody else does.”

Capitan Tiago, meanwhile, had concluded his interview with Padre Damaso, or rather, to speak more exactly, Padre Damaso had concluded with him.

“So now you are warned!” said the Franciscan on leaving. “All this could have been avoided if you had consulted me beforehand, if you had not lied when I asked you. Try not to play any more foolish tricks, and trust your protector.”

[71]Capitan Tiago walked up and down the sala a few times, meditating and sighing. Suddenly, as if a happy thought had occurred to him, he ran to the oratory and extinguished the candles and the lamp that had been lighted for Ibarra’s safety. “The way is long and there’s yet time,” he muttered.[72]

1Whom the gods would destroy, they first make mad.—TR.

[Contents]

Chapter X
The Town

Almost on the margin of the lake, in the midst of meadows and paddy-fields, lies the town of San Diego.[1] From it sugar, rice, coffee, and fruits are either exported or sold for a small part of their value to the Chinese, who exploit the simplicity and vices of the native farmers.

When on a clear day the boys ascend to the upper part of the church tower, which is beautified by moss and creeping plants, they break out into joyful exclamations at the beauty of the scene spread out before them. In the midst of the clustering roofs of nipa, tiles, corrugated iron, and palm leaves, separated by groves and gardens, each one is able to discover his own home, his little nest. Everything serves as a mark: a tree, that tamarind with its light foliage, that coco palm laden with nuts, like the Astarte Genetrix, or the Diana of Ephesus with her numerous breasts, a bending bamboo, an areca palm, or a cross. Yonder is the river, a huge glassy serpent sleeping on a green carpet, with rocks, scattered here and there along its sandy channel, that break its current into ripples. There, the bed is narrowed between high banks to which the gnarled trees cling with bared roots; here, it becomes a gentle slope where the stream widens and eddies about. Farther away, a small hut built on the edge of the high bank seems to defy the winds, the heights and the depths, presenting [73]with its slender posts the appearance of a huge, long-legged bird watching for a reptile to seize upon. Trunks of palm or other trees with their bark still on them unite the banks by a shaky and infirm foot-bridge which, if not a very secure crossing, is nevertheless a wonderful contrivance for gymnastic exercises in preserving one's balance, a thing not to be despised. The boys bathing in the river are amused by the difficulties of the old woman crossing with a basket on her head or by the antics of the old man who moves tremblingly and loses his staff in the water.

But that which always attracts particular notice is what might be called a peninsula of forest in the sea of cultivated fields. There in that wood are century-old trees with hollow trunks, which die only when their high tops are struck and set on fire by the lightning—and it is said that the fire always checks itself and dies out in the same spot. There are huge points of rock which time and nature are clothing with velvet garments of moss. Layer

after layer of dust settles in the hollows, the rains beat it down, and the birds bring seeds. The tropical vegetation spreads out luxuriantly in thickets and underbrush, while curtains of interwoven vines hang from the branches of the trees and twine about their roots or spread along the ground, as if Flora were not yet satisfied but must place plant above plant. Mosses and fungi live upon the cracked trunks, and orchids—graceful guests—twine in loving embrace with the foliage of the hospitable trees.

Strange legends exist concerning this wood, which is held in awe by the country folk. The most credible account, and therefore the one least known and believed, seems to be this. When the town was still a collection of miserable huts with the grass growing abundantly in the so-called streets, at the time when the wild boar and deer roamed about during the nights, there arrived in the place one day an old, hollow-eyed Spaniard, who spoke Tagalog rather well. After looking about and inspecting the land, he finally inquired for the owners of this wood, in which [74]there were hot springs. Some persons who claimed to be such presented themselves, and the old man acquired it in exchange for clothes, jewels, and a sum of money. Soon afterward he disappeared mysteriously. The people thought that he had been spirited away, when a bad odor from the neighboring wood attracted the attention of some herdsmen. Tracing this, they found the decaying corpse of the old Spaniard hanging from the branch of a balete tree.2 In life he had inspired fear by his deep, hollow voice, his sunken eyes, and his mirthless laugh, but now, dead by his own act, he disturbed the sleep of the women. Some threw the jewels into the river and burned the clothes, and from the time that the corpse was buried at the foot of the balete itself, no one willingly ventured near the spot. A belated herdsman looking for some of his strayed charges told of lights that he had seen there, and when some venturesome youths went to the place they heard mournful cries. To win the smiles of his disdainful lady, a forlorn lover agreed to spend the night there and in proof to wrap around the trunk a long piece of rattan, but he died of a quick fever that seized him the very next day. Stories and legends still cluster about the place.

A few months after the finding of the old Spaniard's body there appeared a youth, apparently a Spanish mestizo, who said that he was the son of the deceased. He established himself in the place and devoted his attention to agriculture, especially the raising of indigo. Don Saturnino was a silent

young man with a violent disposition, even cruel at times, yet he was energetic and industrious. He surrounded the grave of his father with a [75]wall, but visited it only at rare intervals. When he was along in years, he married a young woman from Manila, and she became the mother of Don Rafael, the father of Crisostomo. From his youth Don Rafael was a favorite with the country people. The agricultural methods introduced and encouraged by his father spread rapidly, new settlers poured in, the Chinese came, and the settlement became a village with a native priest. Later the village grew into a town, the priest died, and Fray Damaso came.

All this time the tomb and the land around it remained unmolested. Sometimes a crowd of boys armed with clubs and stones would become bold enough to wander into the place to gather guavas, papayas, lomboy, and other fruits, but it frequently happened that when their sport was at its height, or while they gazed in awed silence at the rotting piece of rope which still swung from the branch, stones would fall, coming from they knew not where. Then with cries of "The old man! The old man!" they would throw away fruit and clubs, jump from the trees, and hurry between the rocks and through the thickets; nor would they stop running until they were well out of the wood, some pale and breathless, others weeping, and only a few laughing.[76]

1We have been unable to find any town of this name, but many of these conditions.—*Author's note*.

San Diego and Santiago are variant forms of the name of the patron saint of Spain, St. James.—TR.

2The "sacred tree" of Malaya, being a species of banyan that begins life as a vine twining on another tree, which it finally strangles, using the dead trunk as a support until it is able to stand alone. When old it often covers a large space with gnarled and twisted trunks of varied shapes and sizes, thus presenting a weird and grotesque appearance. This tree was held in reverent awe by the primitive Filipinos, who believed it to be the abode of the *nono*, or ancestral ghosts, and is still the object of superstitious beliefs,—TR.

[Contents]

Chapter XI
The Rulers

Divide and rule.

(*The New Machiavelli.*)

Who were the caciques of the town?

Don Rafael, when alive, even though he was the richest, owned more land, and was the patron of nearly everybody, had not been one of them. As he was modest and depreciated the value of his own deeds, no faction in his favor had ever been formed in the town, and we have already seen how the people all rose up against him when they saw him hesitate upon being attacked.

Could it be Capitan Tiago? True it was that when he went there he was received with an orchestra by his debtors, who banqueted him and heaped gifts upon him. The finest fruits burdened his table and a quarter of deer or wild boar was his share of the hunt. If he found the horse of a debtor beautiful, half an hour afterwards it was in his stable. All this was true, but they laughed at him behind his back and in secret called him "Sacristan Tiago."

Perhaps it was the gobernadorcillo?[1] No, for he was [77]only an unhappy mortal who commanded not, but obeyed; who ordered not, but was ordered; who drove not, but was driven. Nevertheless, he had to answer to the alcalde for having commanded, ordered, and driven, just as if he were the originator of everything. Yet be it said to his credit that he had never presumed upon or usurped such honors, which had cost him five thousand pesos and many humiliations. But considering the income it brought him, it was cheap.

Well then, might it be God? Ah, the good God disturbed neither the consciences nor the sleep of the inhabitants. At least, He did not make them tremble, and if by chance He might have been mentioned in a sermon, surely they would have sighed longingly, "Oh, that only there were a God!" To the good Lord they paid little attention, as the saints gave them enough to do. For those poor folk God had come to be like those unfortunate

monarchs who are surrounded by courtiers to whom alone the people render homage.

San Diego was a kind of Rome: not the Rome of the time when the cunning Romulus laid out its walls with a plow, nor of the later time when, bathed in its own and others' blood, it dictated laws to the world—no, it was a Rome of our own times with the difference that in place of marble monuments and colosseums it had its monuments of sawali and its cockpit of nipa. The curate was the Pope in the Vatican; the alferez of the Civil Guard, the King of Italy on the Quirinal: all, it must be understood, on a scale of nipa and bamboo. Here, as there, continual quarreling went on, since each wished to be the master [78]and considered the other an intruder. Let us examine the characteristics of each.

Fray Bernardo Salvi was that silent young Franciscan of whom we have spoken before. In his habits and manners he was quite different from his brethren and even from his predecessor, the violent Padre Damaso. He was thin and sickly, habitually pensive, strict in the fulfilment of his religious duties, and careful of his good name. In a month after his arrival nearly every one in the town had joined the Venerable Tertiary Order, to the great distress of its rival, the Society of the Holy Rosary. His soul leaped with joy to see about each neck four or five scapularies and around each waist a knotted girdle, and to behold the procession of corpses and ghosts in*guingón* habits. The senior sacristan made a small fortune selling—or giving away as alms, we should say—all things necessary for the salvation of the soul and the warfare against the devil, as it is well known that this spirit, which formerly had the temerity to contradict God himself face to face and to doubt His words, as is related in the holy book of Job, who carried our Lord Christ through the air as afterwards in the Dark Ages he carried the ghosts, and continues, according to report, to carry the *asuang* of the Philippines, now seems to have become so shamefaced that he cannot endure the sight of a piece of painted cloth and that he fears the knots on a cord. But all this proves nothing more than that there is progress on this side also and that the devil is backward, or at least a conservative, as are all who dwell in darkness. Otherwise, we must attribute to him the weakness of a fifteen-year-old girl.

As we have said, Fray Salvi was very assiduous in the fulfilment of his duties, too assiduous, the alferez thought. While he was preaching—he was

very fond of preaching—the doors of the church were closed, wherein he was like Nero, who allowed no one to leave the theater while he was singing. But the former did it for the salvation and the latter for the corruption of souls. Fray Salvi[79]rarely resorted to blows, but was accustomed to punish every shortcoming of his subordinates with fines. In this respect he was very different from Padre Damaso, who had been accustomed to settle everything with his fists or a cane, administering such chastisement with the greatest good-will. For this, however, he should not be judged too harshly, as he was firm in the belief that the Indian could be managed only by beating him, just as was affirmed by a friar who knew enough to write books, and Padre Damaso never disputed anything that he saw in print, a credulity of which many might have reason to complain. Although Fray Salvi made little use of violence, yet, as an old wiseacre of the town said, what he lacked in quantity he made up in quality. But this should not be counted against him, for the fasts and abstinences thinned his blood and unstrung his nerves and, as the people said, the wind got into his head. Thus it came about that it was not possible to learn from the condition of the sacristans' backs whether the curate was fasting or feasting.

The only rival of this spiritual power, with tendencies toward the temporal, was, as we have said, the alferez: the only one, since the women told how the devil himself would flee from the curate, because, having one day dared to tempt him, he was caught, tied to a bedpost, soundly whipped with a rope, and set at liberty only after nine days. As a consequence, any one who after this would still be the enemy of such a man, deserved to fall into worse repute than even the weak and unwary devils.

But the alferez deserved his fate. His wife was an old Filipina of abundant rouge and paint, known as Doña Consolacion—although her husband and some others called her by quite another name. The alferez revenged his conjugal misfortunes on his own person by getting so drunk that he made a tank of himself, or by ordering his soldiers to drill in the sun while he remained in the shade, or, more frequently, by beating up his consort, who, if she was not a lamb of God to take away one's [80]sins, at least served to lay up for her spouse many torments in Purgatory—if perchance he should get there, a matter of doubt to the devout women. As if for the fun of it, these two used to beat each other up beautifully, giving free shows to the

neighborhood with vocal and instrumental accompaniments, four-handed, soft, loud, with pedal and all.
Whenever these scandals reached the ears of Padre Salvi, he would smile, cross himself, and recite a paternoster. They called him a grafter, a hypocrite, a Carlist, and a miser: he merely smiled and recited more prayers. The alferez had a little anecdote which he always related to the occasional Spaniards who visited him:

"Are you going over to the convento to visit the sanctimonious rascal there, the little curate? Yes! Well, if he offers you chocolate which I doubt—but if he offers it remember this: if he calls to the servant and says, 'Juan, make a cup of chocolate, *eh!*' then stay without fear; but if he calls out, 'Juan, make a cup of chocolate, *ah!*' then take your hat and leave on a run."

"What!" the startled visitor would ask, "does he poison people? *Carambas!*"

"No, man, not at all!"

"What then?"

"'Chocolate*, eh!*' means thick and rich, while 'chocolate, *ah!*' means watered and thin."

But we are of the opinion that this was a slander on the part of the alferez, since the same story is told of many curates. At least, it may be a thing peculiar to the Order.

To make trouble for the curate, the soldier, at the instigation of his wife, would prohibit any one from walking abroad after nine o'clock at night. Doña Consolacion would then claim that she had seen the curate, disguised in a piña camisa and salakot, walking about late. Fray Salvi would take his revenge in a holy manner. Upon seeing the alferez enter the church he would innocently order the sacristan to close all the doors, and would then go [81]up into the pulpit and preach until the very saints closed their eyes and even the wooden dove above his head, the image of the Holy Ghost, murmured for mercy. But the alferez, like all the unregenerate, did not change his ways for this; he would go away cursing, and as soon as he was able to catch a sacristan, or one of the curate's servants, he would arrest him, give him a beating, and make him scrub the floor of the barracks and

that of his own house, which at such times was put in a decent condition. On going to pay the fine imposed by the curate for his absence, the sacristan would explain the cause. Fray Salvi would listen in silence, take the money, and at once turn out his goats and sheep so that they might graze in the alferez's garden, while he himself looked up a new text for another longer and more edifying sermon. But these were only little pleasantries, and if the two chanced to meet they would shake hands and converse politely.

When her husband was sleeping off the wine he had drunk, or was snoring through the siesta, and she could not quarrel with him, Doña Consolacion, in a blue flannel camisa, with a big cigar in her mouth, would take her stand at the window. She could not endure the young people, so from there she would scrutinize and mock the passing girls, who, being afraid of her, would hurry by in confusion, holding their breath the while, and not daring to raise their eyes. One great virtue Doña Consolation possessed, and this was that she had evidently never looked in a mirror.

These were the rulers of the town of San Diego.[82]

1"Petty governor," the chief municipal official, chosen annually from among their own number, with the approval of the parish priest and the central government, by the *principalía*, i.e., persons who owned considerable property or who had previously held some municipal office. The manner of his selection is thus described by a German traveler (Jagor) in the Philippines in 1860: "The election is held in the town hall. The governor or his representative presides, having on his right the parish priest and on his left a clerk, who also acts as interpreter. All the cabezas de barangay, the gobernadorcillo, and those who have formerly occupied the latter position, seat themselves on benches. First, there are chosen by lot six cabezas de barangay and six ex-gobernadorcillos as electors, the actual gobernadorcillo being the thirteenth. The [77n]rest leave the hall. After the presiding officer has read the statutes in a loud voice and reminded the electors of their duty to act in accordance with their consciences and to heed only the welfare of the town, the electors move to a table and write three names on a slip of paper. The person receiving a majority of votes is declared elected gobernadorcillo for the ensuing year, provided that there is no protest from the curate or the electors, and always conditioned upon the approval of the superior authority in Manila, which is never withheld, since the influence of the curate is enough to prevent an unsatisfactory election."—TR.

[Contents]

Chapter XII
All Saints

The one thing perhaps that indisputably distinguishes man from the brute creation is the attention which he pays to those who have passed away and, wonder of wonders! this characteristic seems to be more deeply rooted in proportion to the lack of civilization. Historians relate that the ancient inhabitants of the Philippines venerated and deified their ancestors; but now the contrary is true, and the dead have to entrust themselves to the living. It is also related that the people of New Guinea preserve the bones of their dead in chests and maintain communication with them. The greater part of the peoples of Asia, Africa, and America offer them the finest products of their kitchens or dishes of what was their favorite food when alive, and give banquets at which they believe them to be present. The Egyptians raised up palaces and the Mussulmans built shrines, but the masters in these things, those who have most clearly read the human heart, are the people of Dahomey. These negroes know that man is revengeful, so they consider that nothing will more content the dead than to sacrifice all his enemies upon his grave, and, as man is curious and may not know how to entertain himself in the other life, each year they send him a newsletter under the skin of a beheaded slave.

We ourselves differ from all the rest. In spite of the inscriptions on the tombs, hardly any one believes that the dead rest, and much less, that they rest in peace. The most optimistic fancies his forefathers still roasting in purgatory and, if it turns out that he himself be not completely damned, he will yet be able to associate with them for many [83]years. If any one would contradict let him visit the churches and cemeteries of the country on All Saints' day and he will be convinced.

Now that we are in San Diego let us visit its cemetery, which is located in the midst of paddy-fields, there toward the west—not a city, merely a village of the dead, approached by a path dusty in dry weather and navigable on rainy days. A wooden gate and a fence half of stone and half of bamboo stakes, appear to separate it from the abode of the living but not from the curate's goats and some of the pigs of the neighborhood, who come and go making explorations among the tombs and enlivening the solitude with their presence. In the center of this enclosure rises a large

wooden cross set on a stone pedestal. The storms have doubled over the tin plate for the inscription INRI, and the rains have effaced the letters. At the foot of the cross, as on the real Golgotha, is a confused heap of skulls and bones which the indifferent grave-digger has thrown from the graves he digs, and there they will probably await, not the resurrection of the dead, but the coming of the animals to defile them. Round about may be noted signs of recent excavations; here the earth is sunken, there it forms a low mound. There grow in all their luxuriance the *tarambulo* to prick the feet with its spiny berries and the *pandakaki* to add its odor to that of the cemetery, as if the place did not have smells enough already. Yet the ground is sprinkled with a few little flowers which, like those skulls, are known only to their Creator; their petals wear a pale smile and their fragrance is the fragrance of the tombs. The grass and creepers fill up the corners or climb over the walls and niches to cover and beautify the naked ugliness and in places even penetrate into the fissures made by the earthquakes, so as to hide from sight the revered hollowness of the sepulcher.

At the time we enter, the people have driven the animals away, with the single exception of some old hog, an animal that is hard to convince, who shows his small eyes and [84]pulling back his head from a great gap in the fence, sticks up his snout and seems to say to a woman praying near, “Don’t eat it all, leave something for me, won’t you?”
Two men are digging a grave near one of the tottering walls. One of them, the grave-digger, works with indifference, throwing about bones as a gardener does stones and dry branches, while the other, more intent on his work, is perspiring, smoking, and spitting at every moment.

“Listen,” says the latter in Tagalog, “wouldn’t it be better for us to dig in some other place? This is too recent.”

“One grave is as recent as another.”

“I can’t stand it any longer! That bone you’re just cut in two has blood oozing from it—and those hairs?”

“But how sensitive you are!” was the other’s reproach. “Just as if you were a town clerk! If, like myself, you had dug up a corpse of twenty days, on a dark and rainy night—! My lantern went out—”

His companion shuddered.

“The coffin burst open, the corpse fell half-way out, it stunk—and supposing you had to carry it—the rain wet us both—”

“Ugh! And why did you dig it up?”

The grave-digger looked at him in surprise. “Why? How do I know? I was ordered to do so.”

“Who ordered you?”

The grave-digger stepped backward and looked his companion over from head to foot. “Man, you’re like a Spaniard, for afterwards a Spaniard asked me the same questions, but in secret. So I’m going to answer you as I answered the Spaniard: the fat curate ordered me to do so.”

“Ah! And what did you do with the corpse afterwards?” further questioned the sensitive one.

“The devil! If I didn’t know you and was not sure that you are a *man* I would say that you were certainly a Spaniard of the Civil Guard, since you ask questions just as he did. Well, the fat curate ordered me to bury it in [85]the Chinamen’s cemetery, but the coffin was heavy and the Chinese cemetery far away—”
“No, no! I’m not going to dig any more!” the other interrupted in horror as he threw away his spade and jumped out of the hole. “I’ve cut a skull in two and I’m afraid that it won’t let me sleep tonight.” The old grave-digger laughed to see how the chicken-hearted fellow left, crossing himself.

The cemetery was filling up with men and women dressed in mourning. Some sought a grave for a time, disputing among themselves the while, and as if they were unable to agree, they scattered about, each kneeling where he thought best. Others, who had niches for their deceased relatives, lighted candles and fell to praying devoutly. Exaggerated or suppressed sighs and sobs were heard amid the hum of prayers, *orapreo, orapreiss, requiem-aeternams*, that arose from all sides.

A little old man with bright eyes entered bareheaded. Upon seeing him many laughed, and some women knitted their eyebrows. The old man did not seem to pay any attention to these demonstrations as he went toward a pile of skulls and knelt to look earnestly for something among the bones.

Then he carefully removed the skulls one by one, but apparently without finding what he sought, for he wrinkled his brow, nodded his head from side to side, looked all about him, and finally rose and approached the grave-digger, who raised his head when the old man spoke to him.

“Do you know where there is a beautiful skull, white as the meat of a coconut, with a complete set of teeth, which I had there at the foot of the cross under those leaves?”

The grave-digger shrugged his shoulders.

“Look!” added the old man, showing a silver coin, “I have only this, but I’ll give it to you if you find the skull for me.”

The gleam of the silver caused the grave-digger to consider, [86]and staring toward the heap of bones he said, “Isn’t it there? No? Then I don’t know where it is.”
“Don’t you know? When those who owe me pay me, I’ll give you more,” continued the old man. “It was the skull of my wife, so if you find it for me —”

“Isn’t it there? Then I don’t know! But if you wish, I can give you another.”

“You’re like the grave you’re digging,” apostrophized the old man nervously. “You don’t know the value of what you lose. For whom is that grave?”

“How should I know?” replied the other in bad humor.

“For a corpse!”

“Like the grave, like the grave!” repeated the old man with a dry smile. “You don’t know what you throw away nor what you receive! Dig, dig on!” And he turned away in the direction of the gate.

Meanwhile, the grave-digger had completed his task, attested by the two mounds of fresh red earth at the sides of the grave. He took some buyo from his salakot and began to chew it while he stared stupidly at what was going on around him.[87]
[Contents]

Chapter XIII
Signs of Storm

As the old man was leaving the cemetery there stopped at the head of the path a carriage which, from its dust-covered appearance and sweating horses, seemed to have come from a great distance. Followed by an aged servant, Ibarra left the carriage and dismissed it with a wave of his hand, then gravely and silently turned toward the cemetery.

“My illness and my duties have not permitted me to return,” said the old servant timidly. “Capitan Tiago promised that he would see that a niche was constructed, but I planted some flowers on the grave and set up a cross carved by my own hands.” Ibarra made no reply. “There behind that big cross, sir,” he added when they were well inside the gate, as he pointed to the place.

Ibarra was so intent upon his quest that he did not notice the movement of surprise on the part of the persons who recognized him and suspended their prayers to watch him curiously. He walked along carefully to avoid stepping on any of the graves, which were easily distinguishable by the hollow places in the soil. In other times he had walked on them carelessly, but now they were to be respected: his father lay among them. When he reached the large cross he stopped and looked all around. His companion stood confused and confounded, seeking some mark in the ground, but nowhere was any cross to be seen.

“Was it here?” he murmured through his teeth. “No, there! But the ground has been disturbed.”

Ibarra gave him a look of anguish.

“Yes,” he went on, “I remember that there was a stone [88]near it. The grave was rather short. The grave-digger was sick, so a farmer had to dig it. But let’s ask that man what has become of the cross.”
They went over to where the grave-digger was watching them with curiosity. He removed his salakot respectfully as they approached.

“Can you tell me which is the grave there that had a cross over it?” asked the servant.

The grave-digger looked toward the place and reflected. “A big cross?”

“Yes, a big one!” affirmed the servant eagerly, with a significant look at Ibarra, whose face lighted up.

“A carved cross tied up with rattan?” continued the grave-digger.

“That’s it, that’s it, like this!” exclaimed the servant in answer as he drew on the ground the figure of a Byzantine cross.

“Were there flowers scattered on the grave?”

“Oleanders and tuberoses and forget-me-nots, yes!” the servant added joyfully, offering the grave-digger a cigar.

“Tell us which is the grave and where the cross is.”

The grave-digger scratched his ear and answered with a yawn: “Well, as for the cross, I burned it.”

“Burned it? Why did you burn it?”

“Because the fat curate ordered me to do so.”

“Who is the fat curate?” asked Ibarra.

“Who? Why, the one that beats people with a big cane.”

Ibarra drew his hand across his forehead. “But at least you can tell us where the grave is. You must remember that.”

The grave-digger smiled as he answered quietly, “But the corpse is no longer there.”

“What’s that you’re saying?”

“Yes,” continued the grave-digger in a half-jesting tone. “I buried a woman in that place a week ago.”

[89]“Are you crazy?” cried the servant. “It hasn’t been a year since we buried him.”

“That’s very true, but a good many months ago I dug the body up. The fat curate ordered me to do so and to take it to the cemetery of the Chinamen. But as it was heavy and there was rain that night—”

He was stopped by the threatening attitude of Ibarra, who had caught him by the arm and was shaking him. “Did you do that?” demanded the youth in an indescribable tone.

“Don’t be angry, sir,” stammered the pale and trembling grave-digger. “I didn’t bury him among the Chinamen. Better be drowned than lie among Chinamen, I said to myself, so I threw the body into the lake.”

Ibarra placed both his hands on the grave-digger’s shoulders and stared at him for a long time with an indefinable expression. Then, with the ejaculation, “You are only a miserable slave!” he turned away hurriedly, stepping upon bones, graves, and crosses, like one beside himself.

The grave-digger patted his arm and muttered, “All the trouble dead men cause! The fat padre caned me for allowing it to be buried while I was sick, and this fellow almost tore my arm off for having dug it up. That’s what these Spaniards are! I’ll lose my job yet!”

Ibarra walked rapidly with a far-away look in his eyes, while the aged servant followed him weeping. The sun was setting, and over the eastern sky was flung a heavy curtain of clouds. A dry wind shook the tree-tops and made the bamboo clumps creak. Ibarra went bareheaded, but no tear wet his eyes nor did any sigh escape from his breast. He moved as if fleeing from something, perhaps the shade of his father, perhaps the approaching storm. He crossed through the town to the outskirts on the opposite side and turned toward the old house which he had not entered for so many years. Surrounded by a cactus-covered wall it seemed to beckon to him with its open windows, while the ilang-ilang waved its flower-laden branches joyfully [90]and the doves circled about the conical roof of their cote in the middle of the garden.

But the youth gave no heed to these signs of welcome back to his old home, his eyes being fixed on the figure of a priest approaching from the opposite direction. It was the curate of San Diego, the pensive Franciscan whom we have seen before, the rival of the alferez. The breeze folded back the brim of his wide hat and blew his *guingón* habit closely about him, revealing the outlines of his body and his thin, curved thighs. In his right hand he carried an ivory-headed *palasan* cane.

This was the first time that he and Ibarra had met. When they drew near each other Ibarra stopped and gazed at him from head to foot; Fray Salvi avoided the look and tried to appear unconcerned. After a moment of hesitation Ibarra went up to him quickly and dropping a heavy hand on his shoulder, asked in a husky voice, “What did you do with my father?”

Fray Salvi, pale and trembling as he read the deep feelings that flushed the youth’s face, could not answer; he seemed paralyzed.

“What did you do with my father?” again demanded the youth in a choking voice.

The priest, who was gradually being forced to his knees by the heavy hand that pressed upon his shoulder, made a great effort and answered, “You are mistaken, I did nothing to your father.”

“You didn’t?” went on the youth, forcing him down upon his knees.

“No, I assure you! It was my predecessor, it was Padre Damaso!”

“Ah!” exclaimed the youth, releasing his hold, and clapping his hand desperately to his brow; then, leaving poor Fray Salvi, he turned away and hurried toward his house. The old servant came up and helped the friar to his feet.[91]

[Contents]

Chapter XIV
Tasio: Lunatic or Sage

The peculiar old man wandered about the streets aimlessly. A former student of philosophy, he had given up his career in obedience to his mother's wishes and not from any lack of means or ability. Quite the contrary, it was because his mother was rich and he was said to possess talent. The good woman feared that her son would become learned and forget God, so she had given him his choice of entering the priesthood or leaving college. Being in love, he chose the latter course and married. Then having lost both his wife and his mother within a year, he sought consolation in his books in order to free himself from sorrow, the cockpit, and the dangers of idleness. He became so addicted to his studies and the purchase of books, that he entirely neglected his fortune and gradually ruined himself. Persons of culture called him Don Anastasio, or Tasio the Sage, while the great crowd of the ignorant knew him as Tasio the Lunatic, on account of his peculiar ideas and his eccentric manner of dealing with others.

As we said before, the evening threatened to be stormy. The lightning flashed its pale rays across the leaden sky, the air was heavy and the slight breeze excessively sultry. Tasio had apparently already forgotten his beloved skull, and now he was smiling as he looked at the dark clouds. Near the church he met a man wearing an alpaca coat, who carried in one hand a large bundle of candles and in the other a tasseled cane, the emblem of his office as gobernadorcillo.

"You seem to be merry?" he greeted Tasio in Tagalog.

[92]"Truly I am, señor capitan, I'm merry because I hope for something."
"Ah? What do you hope for?"

"The storm!"

"The storm? Are you thinking of taking a bath?" asked the gobernadorcillo in a jesting way as he stared at the simple attire of the old man.

"A bath? That's not a bad idea, especially when one has just stumbled over some trash!" answered Tasio in a similar, though somewhat more offensive

tone, staring at the other's face. "But I hope for something better."

"What, then?"

"Some thunderbolts that will kill people and burn down houses," returned the Sage seriously.

"Why don't you ask for the deluge at once?"

"We all deserve it, even you and I! You, señor gobernadorcillo, have there a bundle of tapers that came from some Chinese shop, yet this now makes the tenth year that I have been proposing to each new occupant of your office the purchase of lightning-rods. Every one laughs at me, and buys bombs and rockets and pays for the ringing of bells. Even you yourself, on the day after I made my proposition, ordered from the Chinese founders a bell in honor of St. Barbara,[1] when science has shown that it is dangerous to ring the bells during a storm. Explain to me why in the year '70, when lightning struck in Biñan, it hit the very church tower and destroyed the clock and altar. What was the bell of St. Barbara doing then?"

At the moment there was a vivid flash. "*Jesús, María, y José!* Holy St. Barbara!" exclaimed the gobernadorcillo, turning pale and crossing himself.

Tasio burst out into a loud laugh. "You are worthy of your patroness," he remarked dryly in Spanish as he turned his back and went toward the church.

Inside, the sacristans were preparing a catafalque, bordered [93]with candles placed in wooden sockets. Two large tables had been placed one above the other and covered with black cloth across which ran white stripes, with here and there a skull painted on it.

"Is that for the souls or for the candles?" inquired the old man, but noticing two boys, one about ten and the other seven, he turned to them without awaiting an answer from the sacristans.

"Won't you come with me, boys?" he asked them. "Your mother has prepared a supper for you fit for a curate."

"The senior sacristan will not let us leave until eight o'clock, sir," answered the larger of the two boys. "I expect to get my pay to give it to our mother."

“Ah! And where are you going now?”

“To the belfry, sir, to ring the knell for the souls.”

“Going to the belfry! Then take care! Don’t go near the bells during the storm!”

Tasio then left the church, not without first bestowing a look of pity on the two boys, who were climbing the stairway into the organ-loft. He passed his hand over his eyes, looked at the sky again, and murmured, “Now I should be sorry if thunderbolts should fall.” With his head bowed in thought he started toward the outskirts of the town.

“Won’t you come in?” invited a voice in Spanish from a window.

The Sage raised his head and saw a man of thirty or thirty-five years of age smiling at him.

“What are you reading there?” asked Tasio, pointing to a book the man held in his hand.

“A work just published: ‘The Torments Suffered by the Blessed Souls in Purgatory,’” the other answered with a smile.

“Man, man, man!” exclaimed the Sage in an altered tone as he entered the house. “The author must be a very clever person.”

[94]Upon reaching the top of the stairway, he was cordially received by the master of the house, Don Filipo Lino, and his young wife, Doña Teodora Viña. Don Filipo was the teniente-mayor of the town and leader of one of the parties—the liberal faction, if it be possible to speak so, and if there exist parties in the towns of the Philippines.
“Did you meet in the cemetery the son of the deceased Don Rafael, who has just returned from Europe?”

“Yes, I saw him as he alighted from his carriage.”

“They say that he went to look for his father’s grave. It must have been a terrible blow.”

The Sage shrugged his shoulders.

“Doesn’t such a misfortune affect you?” asked the young wife.

“You know very well that I was one of the six who accompanied the body, and it was I who appealed to the Captain-General when I saw that no one, not even the authorities, said anything about such an outrage, although I always prefer to honor a good man in life rather than to worship him after his death.”

“Well?”

“But, madam, I am not a believer in hereditary monarchy. By reason of the Chinese blood which I have received from my mother I believe a little like the Chinese: I honor the father on account of the son and not the son on account of the father. I believe that each one should receive the reward or punishment for his own deeds, not for those of another.”

“Did you order a mass said for your dead wife, as I advised you yesterday?” asked the young woman, changing the subject of conversation.

“No,” answered the old man with a smile.

“What a pity!” she exclaimed with unfeigned regret.

“They say that until ten o’clock tomorrow the souls will wander at liberty, awaiting the prayers of the living, and that during these days one mass is equivalent to five on [95]other days of the year, or even to six, as the curate said this morning.”
“What! Does that mean that we have a period without paying, which we should take advantage of?”

“But, Doray,” interrupted Don Filipo, “you know that Don Anastasio doesn’t believe in purgatory.”

“I don’t believe in purgatory!” protested the old man, partly rising from his seat. “Even when I know something of its history!”

“The history of purgatory!” exclaimed the couple, full of surprise. “Come, relate it to us.”

“You don’t know it and yet you order masses and talk about its torments? Well, as it has begun to rain and threatens to continue, we shall have time to relieve the monotony,” replied Tasio, falling into a thoughtful mood.

Don Filipo closed the book which he held in his hand and Doray sat down at his side determined not to believe anything that the old man was about to say.

The latter began in the following manner: “Purgatory existed long before Our Lord came into the world and must have been located in the center of the earth, according to Padre Astete; or somewhere near Cluny, according to the monk of whom Padre Girard tells us. But the location is of least importance here. Now then, who were scorching in those fires that had been burning from the beginning of the world? Its very ancient existence is proved by Christian philosophy, which teaches that God has created nothing new since he rested.”

“But it could have existed *in potentia* and not *in actu*,”2 observed Don Filipo.

“Very well! But yet I must answer that some knew of it and as existing *in actu*. One of these was Zarathustra, or Zoroaster, who wrote part of the Zend-Avesta and founded a religion which in some points resembles ours, and Zarathustra, according to the scholars, flourished at least eight hundred years before Christ. I say ‘at least,’ [96]since Gaffarel, after examining the testimony of Plato, Xanthus of Lydia, Pliny, Hermippus, and Eudoxus, believes it to have been two thousand five hundred years before our era. However that may be, it is certain that Zarathustra talked of a kind of purgatory and showed ways of getting free from it. The living could redeem the souls of those who died in sin by reciting passages from the Avesta and by doing good works, but under the condition that the person offering the petitions should be a relative, up to the fourth generation. The time for this occurred every year and lasted five days. Later, when this belief had become fixed among the people, the priests of that religion saw in it a chance of profit and so they exploited ‘the deep and dark prison where remorse reigns,’ as Zarathustra called it. They declared that by the payment of a small coin it was possible to save a soul from a year of torture, but as in that religion there were sins punishable by three hundred to a thousand years of suffering, such as lying, faithlessness, failure to keep one’s word, and so on, it resulted that the rascals took in countless sums. Here you will observe something like our purgatory, if you take into account the differences in the religions.”

A vivid flash of lightning, followed by rolling thunder, caused Doray to start up and exclaim, as she crossed herself: "*Jesús, María, y José!* I'm going to leave you, I'm going to burn some sacred palm and light candles of penitence."

The rain began to fall in torrents. The Sage Tasio, watching the young woman leave, continued: "Now that she is not here, we can consider this matter more rationally. Doray, even though a little superstitious, is a good Catholic, and I don't care to root out the faith from her heart. A pure and simple faith is as distinct from fanaticism as the flame from smoke or music from discords: only the fools and the deaf confuse them. Between ourselves we can say that the idea of purgatory is good, holy, and rational. It perpetuates the union of those who [97]were and those who are, leading thus to greater purity of life. The evil is in its abuse.

"But let us now see where Catholicism got this idea, which does not exist in the Old Testament nor in the Gospels. Neither Moses nor Christ made the slightest mention of it, and the single passage which is cited from Maccabees is insufficient. Besides, this book was declared apocryphal by the Council of Laodicea and the holy Catholic Church accepted it only later. Neither have the pagan religions anything like it. The oft-quoted passage in Virgil, *Aliae panduntur inanes*,3 which probably gave occasion for St. Gregory the Great to speak of drowned souls, and to Dante for another narrative in his *Divine Comedy*, cannot have been the origin of this belief. Neither the Brahmins, the Buddhists, nor the Egyptians, who may have given Rome her Charon and her Avernus, had anything like this idea. I won't speak now of the religions of northern Europe, for they were religions of warriors, bards, and hunters, and not of philosophers. While they yet preserve their beliefs and even their rites under Christian forms, they were unable to accompany the hordes in the spoliation of Rome or to seat themselves on the Capitoline; the religions of the mists were dissipated by the southern sun. Now then, the early Christians did not believe in a purgatory but died in the blissful confidence of shortly seeing God face to face. Apparently the first fathers of the Church who mentioned it were St. Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and St. Irenaeus, who were all perhaps influenced by Zarathustra's religion, which still flourished and was widely spread throughout the East, since at every step we read reproaches against Origen's Orientalism. St. Irenaeus proved its existence by the fact

that Christ remained 'three days in the depths of the [98]earth,' three days of purgatory, and deduced from this that every soul must remain there until the resurrection of the body, although the '*Hodie mecum eris in Paradiso*'[4] seems to contradict it. St. Augustine also speaks of purgatory and, if not affirming its existence, yet he did not believe it impossible, conjecturing that in another existence there might continue the punishments that we receive in this life for our sins."
"The devil with St. Augustine!" ejaculated Don Filipo. "He wasn't satisfied with what we suffer here but wished a continuance."

"Well, so it went" some believed it and others didn't. Although St. Gregory finally came to admit it in his *de quibusdam levibus culpis esse ante judicium purgatorius ignis credendus est*,[5] yet nothing definite was done until the year 1439, that is, eight centuries later, when the Council of Florence declared that there must exist a purifying fire for the souls of those who have died in the love of God but without having satisfied divine Justice. Lastly, the Council of Trent under Pius IV in 1563, in the twenty-fifth session, issued the purgatorial decree beginning *Cura catholica ecclesia, Spiritu Santo edocta*, wherein it deduces that, after the office of the mass, the petitions of the living, their prayers, alms, and other pious works are the surest means of freeing the souls. Nevertheless, the Protestants do not believe in it nor do the Greek Fathers, since they reject any Biblical authority for it and say that our responsibility ends with death, and that the '*Quodcumque ligaberis in terra*,'[6] does not mean '*usque ad purgatorium,*'[7] but to this the answer can be made that since purgatory is located in the center of the earth it fell naturally under the control of St. Peter. But I should never get through if I had to relate all that [99]has been said on the subject. Any day that you wish to discuss the matter with me, come to my house and there we will consult the books and talk freely and quietly.
"Now I must go. I don't understand why Christian piety permits robbery on this night—and you, the authorities, allow it—and I fear for my books. If they should steal them to read I wouldn't object, but I know that there are many who wish to burn them in order to do for me an act of charity, and such charity, worthy of the Caliph Omar, is to be dreaded. Some believe that on account of those books I am already damned—"

“But I suppose that you do believe in damnation?” asked Doray with a smile, as she appeared carrying in a brazier the dry palm leaves, which gave off a peculiar smoke and an agreeable odor.

“I don’t know, madam, what God will do with me,” replied the old man thoughtfully. “When I die I will commit myself to Him without fear and He may do with me what He wishes. But a thought strikes me!”

“What thought is that?”

“If the only ones who can be saved are the Catholics, and of them only five per cent—as many curates say—and as the Catholics form only a twelfth part of the population of the world—if we believe what statistics show—it would result that after damning millions and millions of men during the countless ages that passed before the Saviour came to the earth, after a Son of God has died for us, it is now possible to save only five in every twelve hundred. That cannot be so! I prefer to believe and say with Job: ‘Wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro, and wilt thou pursue the dry stubble?’ No, such a calamity is impossible and to believe it is blasphemy!”

“What do you wish? Divine Justice, divine Purity—”

“Oh, but divine Justice and divine Purity saw the future before the creation,” answered the old man, as he rose shuddering. “Man is an accidental and not a necessary part of creation, and that God cannot have created [100]him, no indeed, only to make a few happy and condemn hundreds to eternal misery, and all in a moment, for hereditary faults! No! If that be true, strangle your baby son sleeping there! If such a belief were not a blasphemy against that God, who must be the Highest Good, then the Phenician Moloch, which was appeased with human sacrifices and innocent blood, and in whose belly were burned the babes torn from their mothers’ breasts, that bloody deity, that horrible divinity, would be by the side of Him a weak girl, a friend, a mother of humanity!”

Horrified, the Lunatic—or the Sage—left the house and ran along the street in spite of the rain and the darkness. A lurid flash, followed by frightful thunder and filling the air with deadly currents, lighted the old man as he stretched his hand toward the sky and cried out: “Thou protestest! I know that Thou art not cruel, I know that I must only name Thee Good!”

The flashes of lightning became more frequent and the storm increased in violence.[101]

1St. Barbara is invoked during thunder-storms as the special protectress against lightning.—TR.

2In possibility (i.e., latent) and not: in fact.—TR.

3

> "For this are various penances enjoined;
> And some are hung to bleach upon the wind;
> Some plunged in waters, others purged in fires,
> Till all the dregs are drained, and all the rust expires."

Dryden, *Virgil's Aeneid*, VI.

4"Today shalt thou be with me in paradise."—Luke xxiii, 43.

5It should be believed that for some light faults there is a purgatorial fire before the judgment.

6Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth.—Matt, xvi, 19.

7Even up to purgatory.

[Contents]

Chapter XV
The Sacristans

The thunder resounded, roar following close upon roar, each preceded' by a blinding flash of zigzag lightning, so that it might have been said that God was writing his name in fire and that the eternal arch of heaven was trembling with fear. The rain, whipped about in a different direction each moment by the mournfully whistling wind, fell in torrents. With a voice full of fear the bells sounded their sad supplication, and in the brief pauses between the roars of the unchained elements tolled forth sorrowful peals, like plaintive groans.

On the second floor of the church tower were the two boys whom we saw talking to the Sage. The younger, a child of seven years with large black eyes and a timid countenance, was huddling close to his brother, a boy of ten, whom he greatly resembled in features, except that the look on the elder's face was deeper and firmer.

Both were meanly dressed in clothes full of rents and patches. They sat upon a block of wood, each holding the end of a rope which extended upward and was lost amid the shadows above. The wind-driven rain reached them and snuffed the piece of candle burning dimly on the large round stone that was used to furnish the thunder on Good Friday by being rolled around the gallery.

"Pull on the rope, Crispin, pull!" cried the elder to his little brother, who did as he was told, so that from above was heard a faint peal, instantly drowned out by the reechoing thunder.

"Oh, if we were only at home now with mother," sighed [102]the younger, as he gazed at his brother. "There I shouldn't be afraid."
The elder did not answer; he was watching the melting wax of the candle, apparently lost in thought.

"There no one would say that I stole," went on Crispin. "Mother wouldn't allow it. If she knew that they whip me—"

The elder took his gaze from the flame, raised his head, and clutching the thick rope pulled violently on it so that a sonorous peal of the bells was

heard.

“Are we always going to live this way, brother?” continued Crispin. “I’d like to get sick at home tomorrow, I’d like to fall into a long sickness so that mother might take care of me and not let me come back to the convento. So I’d not be called a thief nor would they whip me. And you too, brother, you must get sick with me.”

“No,” answered the older, “we should all die: mother of grief and we of hunger.”

Crispin remained silent for a moment, then asked, “How much will you get this month?”

“Two pesos. They’re fined me twice.”

“Then pay what they say I’ve stolen, so that they won’t call us thieves. Pay it, brother!”

“Are you crazy, Crispin? Mother wouldn’t have anything to eat. The senior sacristan says that you’ve stolen two gold pieces, and they’re worth thirty-two pesos.”

The little one counted on his fingers up to thirty-two. “Six hands and two fingers over and each finger a peso!” he murmured thoughtfully. “And each peso, how many cuartos?”

“A hundred and sixty.”

“A hundred and sixty cuartos? A hundred and sixty times a cuarto? Goodness! And how many are a hundred and sixty?”

“Thirty-two hands,” answered the older.

Crispin looked hard at his little hands. “Thirty-two hands,” he repeated, “six hands and two fingers over [103]and each finger thirty-two hands and each finger a cuarto—goodness, what a lot of cuartos! I could hardly count them in three days; and with them could be bought shoes for our feet, a hat for my head when the sun shines hot, a big umbrella for the rain, and food, and clothes for you and mother, and—” He became silent and thoughtful again. “Now I’m sorry that I didn’t steal!” he soon exclaimed.

“Crispin!” reproached his brother.

“Don’t get angry! The curate has said that he’ll beat me to death if the money doesn’t appear, and if I had stolen it I could make it appear. Anyhow, if I died you and mother would at least have clothes. Oh, if I had only stolen it!”

The elder pulled on the rope in silence. After a time he replied with a sigh: “What I’m afraid of is that mother will scold you when she knows about it.”

“Do you think so?” asked the younger with astonishment. “You will tell her that they’re whipped me and I’ll show the welts on my back and my torn pocket. I had only one cuarto, which was given to me last Easter, but the curate took that away from me yesterday. I never saw a prettier cuarto! No, mother won’t believe it.”

“If the curate says so—”

Crispin began to cry, murmuring between his sobs, “Then go home alone! I don’t want to go. Tell mother that I’m sick. I don’t want to go.”

“Crispin, don’t cry!” pleaded the elder. “Mother won’t believe it—don’t cry! Old Tasio told us that a fine supper is waiting for us.”

“A fine supper! And I haven’t eaten for a long time. They won’t give me anything to eat until the two gold pieces appear. But, if mother believes it? You must tell her that the senior sacristan is a liar but that the curate believes him and that all of them are liars, that they say that we’re thieves because our father is a vagabond who—”

[104]At that instant a head appeared at the top of the stairway leading down to the floor below, and that head, like Medusa’s, froze the words on the child’s lips. It was a long, narrow head covered with black hair, with blue glasses concealing the fact that one eye was sightless. The senior sacristan was accustomed to appear thus without noise or warning of any kind. The two brothers turned cold with fear.

“On you, Basilio, I impose a fine of two reals for not ringing the bells in time,” he said in a voice so hollow that his throat seemed to lack vocal chords. “You, Crispin, must stay tonight, until what you stole reappears.”

Crispin looked at his brother as if pleading for protection.

“But we already have permission—mother expects us at eight o’clock,” objected Basilio timidly.

“Neither shall you go home at eight, you’ll stay until ten.”

“But, sir, after nine o’clock no one is allowed to be out and our house is far from here.”

“Are you trying to give me orders?” growled the man irritably, as he caught Crispin by the arm and started to drag him away.

“Oh, sir, it’s been a week now since we’re seen our mother,” begged Basilio, catching hold of his brother as if to defend him.

The senior sacristan struck his hand away and jerked at Crispin, who began to weep as he fell to the floor, crying out to his brother, “Don’t leave me, they’re going to kill me!”

The sacristan gave no heed to this and dragged him on to the stairway. As they disappeared among the shadows below Basilio stood speechless, listening to the sounds of his brother’s body striking against the steps. Then followed the sound of a blow and heartrending cries that died away in the distance.

The boy stood on tiptoe, hardly breathing and listening [105]fixedly, with his eyes unnaturally wide and his fists clenched. “When shall I be strong enough to plow a field?” he muttered between his teeth as he started below hastily. Upon reaching the organ-loft he paused to listen; the voice of his brother was fast dying away in the distance and the cries of “Mother! Brother!” were at last completely cut off by the sound of a closing door. Trembling and perspiring, he paused for a moment with his fist in his mouth to keep down a cry of anguish. He let his gaze wander about the dimly lighted church where an oil-lamp gave a ghostly light, revealing the catafalque in the center. The doors were closed and fastened, and the windows had iron bars on them. Suddenly he reascended the stairway to the place where the candle was burning and then climbed up into the third floor of the belfry. After untying the ropes from the bell-clappers he again descended. He was pale and his eyes glistened, but not with tears.

Meanwhile, the rain was gradually ceasing and the sky was clearing. Basilio knotted the ropes together, tied one end to a rail of the balustrade, and

without even remembering to put out the light let himself down into the darkness outside. A few moments later voices were heard on one of the streets of the town, two shots resounded, but no one seemed to be alarmed and silence again reigned.[106]

[Contents]

Chapter XVI
Sisa

Through the dark night the villagers slept. The families who had remembered their dead gave themselves up to quiet and satisfied sleep, for they had recited their requiems, the novena of the souls, and had burned many wax tapers before the sacred images. The rich and powerful had discharged the duties their positions imposed upon them. On the following day they would hear three masses said by each priest and would give two pesos for another, besides buying a bull of indulgences for the dead. Truly, divine justice is not nearly so exacting as human.

But the poor and indigent who earn scarcely enough to keep themselves alive and who also have to pay tribute to the petty officials, clerks, and soldiers, that they may be allowed to live in peace, sleep not so tranquilly as gentle poets who have perhaps not felt the pinches of want would have us believe. The poor are sad and thoughtful, for on that night, if they have not recited many prayers, yet they have prayed much—with pain in their eyes and tears in their hearts. They have not the novenas, nor do they know the responsories, versicles, and prayers which the friars have composed for those who lack original ideas and feelings, nor do they understand them. They pray in the language of their misery: their souls weep for them and for those dead beings whose love was their wealth. Their lips may proffer the salutations, but their minds cry out complaints, charged with lamentations. Wilt Thou be satisfied, O Thou who blessedst poverty, and you, O suffering souls, with the simple prayers of the poor, offered before a rude picture in the light of a dim wick, or do you [107]perhaps desire wax tapers before bleeding Christs and Virgins with small mouths and crystal eyes, and masses in Latin recited mechanically by priests? And thou, Religion preached for suffering humanity, hast thou forgotten thy mission of consoling the oppressed in their misery and of humiliating the powerful in their pride? Hast thou now promises only for the rich, for those who, can pay thee?

The poor widow watches among the children who sleep at her side. She is thinking of the indulgences that she ought to buy for the repose of the souls of her parents and of her dead husband. “A peso,” she says, “a peso is a week of happiness for my children, a week of laughter and joy, my savings

for a month, a dress for my daughter who is becoming a woman." "But it is necessary that you put aside these worldly desires," says the voice that she heard in the pulpit, "it is necessary that you make sacrifices." Yes, it is necessary. The Church does not gratuitously save the beloved souls for you nor does it distribute indulgences without payment. You must buy them, so tonight instead of sleeping you should work. Think of your daughter, so poorly clothed! Fast, for heaven is dear! Decidedly, it seems that the poor enter not into heaven. Such thoughts wander through the space enclosed between the rough mats spread out on the bamboo floor and the ridge of the roof, from which hangs the hammock wherein the baby swings. The infant's breathing is easy and peaceful, but from time to time he swallows and smacks his lips; his hungry stomach, which is not satisfied with what his older brothers have given him, dreams of eating.

The cicadas chant monotonously, mingling their ceaseless notes with the trills of the cricket hidden in the grass, or the chirp of the little lizard which has come out in search of food, while the big gekko, no longer fearing the water, disturbs the concert with its ill-omened voice as it shows its head from out the hollow of the decayed tree-trunk.

[108]The dogs howl mournfully in the streets and superstitious folk, hearing them, are convinced that they see spirits and ghosts. But neither the dogs nor the other animals see the sorrows of men—yet how many of these exist! Distant from the town an hour's walk lives the mother of Basilio and Crispin. The wife of a heartless man, she struggles to live for her sons, while her husband is a vagrant gamester with whom her interviews are rare but always painful. He has gradually stripped her of her few jewels to pay the cost of his vices, and when the suffering Sisa no longer had anything that he might take to satisfy his whims, he had begun to maltreat her. Weak in character, with more heart than intellect, she knew only how to love and to weep. Her husband was a god and her sons were his angels, so he, knowing to what point he was loved and feared, conducted himself like all false gods: daily he became more cruel, more inhuman, more wilful. Once when he had appeared with his countenance gloomier than ever before, Sisa had consulted him about the plan of making a sacristan of Basilio, and he had merely continued to stroke his game-cock, saying neither yes nor no, only asking whether the boy would earn much money. She had not dared to insist, but her needy situation and her desire that the boys should learn to

read and write in the town school forced her to carry out the plan. Still her husband had said nothing.

That night, between ten and eleven o'clock, when the stars were glittering in a sky now cleared of all signs of the storm of the early evening, Sisa sat on a wooden bench watching some fagots that smouldered upon the fireplace fashioned of rough pieces of natural rock. Upon a tripod, or *tunko*, was a small pot of boiling rice and upon the red coals lay three little dried fishes such as are sold at three for two cuartos. Her chin rested in the palm of her hand while she gazed at the weak yellow glow peculiar to the cane, which burns rapidly and leaves embers that quickly grow pale. A sad smile lighted up her face as she recalled [109]a funny riddle about the pot and the fire which Crispin had once propounded to her. The boy said: "The black man sat down and the red man looked at him, a moment passed, and cock-a-doodle-doo rang forth."

Sisa was still young, and it was plain that at one time she had been pretty and attractive. Her eyes, which, like her disposition, she had given to her sons, were beautiful, with long lashes and a deep look. Her nose was regular and her pale lips curved pleasantly. She was what the Tagalogs call *kayumanguing-kaligátan*; that is, her color was a clear, pure brown. In spite of her youthfulness, pain and perhaps even hunger had begun to make hollow her pallid cheeks, and if her abundant hair, in other times the delight and adornment of her person, was even yet simply and neatly arranged, though without pins or combs, it was not from coquetry but from habit.

Sisa had been for several days confined to the house sewing upon some work which had been ordered for the earliest possible time. In order to earn the money, she had not attended mass that morning, as it would have taken two hours at least to go to the town and return: poverty obliges one to sin! She had finished the work and delivered it but had received only a promise of payment. All that day she had been anticipating the pleasures of the evening, for she knew that her sons were coming and she had intended to make them some presents. She had bought some small fishes, picked the most beautiful tomatoes in her little garden, as she knew that Crispin was very fond of them, and begged from a neighbor, old Tasio the Sage, who lived half a mile away, some slices of dried wild boar's meat and a leg of wild duck, which Basilio especially liked. Full of hope, she had cooked the

whitest of rice, which she herself had gleaned from the threshing-floors. It was indeed a curate's meal for the poor boys.

But by an unfortunate chance her husband came and ate the rice, the slices of wild boar's meat, the duck leg, five of the little fishes, and the tomatoes. Sisa said nothing, [110]although she felt as if she herself were being eaten. His hunger at length appeased, he remembered to ask for the boys. Then Sisa smiled happily and resolved that she would not eat that night, because what remained was not enough for three. The father had asked for their sons and that for her was better than eating.
Soon he picked up his game-cock and started away.

"Don't you want to see them?" she asked tremulously. "Old Tasio told me that they would be a little late. Crispin now knows how to read and perhaps Basilio will bring his wages."

This last reason caused the husband to pause and waver, but his good angel triumphed. "In that case keep a peso for me," he said as he went away.

Sisa wept bitterly, but the thought of her sons soon dried her tears. She cooked some more rice and prepared the only three fishes that were left: each would have one and a half. "They'll have good appetites," she mused, "the way is long and hungry stomachs have no heart."

So she sat, he ear strained to catch every sound, listening to the lightest footfalls: strong and clear, Basilio; light and irregular, Crispin—thus she mused. The *kalao* called in the woods several times after the rain had ceased, but still her sons did not come. She put the fishes inside the pot to keep them warm and went to the threshold of the hut to look toward the road. To keep herself company, she began to sing in a low voice, a voice usually so sweet and tender that when her sons listened to her singing the *kundíman* they wept without knowing why, but tonight it trembled and the notes were halting. She stopped singing and gazed earnestly into the darkness, but no one was coming from the town—that noise was only the wind shaking the raindrops from the wide banana leaves.

Suddenly a black dog appeared before her dragging something along the path. Sisa was frightened but caught up a stone and threw it at the dog, which ran away howling mournfully. She was not superstitious, but she had heard [111]so much about presentiments and black dogs that terror seized

her. She shut the door hastily and sat down by the light. Night favors credulity and the imagination peoples the air with specters. She tried to pray, to call upon the Virgin and upon God to watch over her sons, especially her little Crispin. Then she forgot her prayers as her thoughts wandered to think about them, to recall the features of each, those features that always wore a smile for her both asleep and awake. Suddenly she felt her hair rise on her head and her eyes stared wildly; illusion or reality, she saw Crispin standing by the fireplace, there where he was wont to sit and prattle to her, but now he said nothing as he gazed at her with those large, thoughtful eyes, and smiled.

"Mother, open the door! Open, mother!" cried the voice of Basilio from without.

Sisa shuddered violently and the vision disappeared.[112]

[Contents]

Chapter XVII
Basilio

La vida es sueño.

Basilio was scarcely inside when he staggered and fell into his mother's arms. An inexplicable chill seized Sisa as she saw him enter alone. She wanted to speak but could make no sound; she wanted to embrace her son but lacked the strength; to weep was impossible. At sight of the blood which covered the boy's forehead she cried in a tone that seemed to come from a breaking heart, "My sons!"

"Don't be afraid, mother," Basilio reassured her. "Crispin stayed at the convento."

"At the convento? He stayed at the convento? Is he alive?"

The boy raised his eyes to her. "Ah!" she sighed, passing from the depths of sorrow to the heights of joy. She wept and embraced her son, covering his bloody forehead with kisses.

"Crispin is alive! You left him at the convento! But why are you wounded, my son? Have you had a fall?" she inquired, as she examined him anxiously.

"The senior sacristan took Crispin away and told me that I could not leave until ten o'clock, but it was already late and so I ran away. In the town the soldiers challenged me, I started to run, they fired, and a bullet grazed my forehead. I was afraid they would arrest me and beat me and make me scrub out the barracks, as they did with Pablo, who is still sick from it."

"My God, my God!" murmured his mother, shuddering. "Thou hast saved him!" Then while she sought for [113]bandages, water, vinegar, and a feather, she went on, "A finger's breadth more and they would have killed you, they would have killed my boy! The civil-guards do not think of the mothers."

"You must say that I fell from a tree so that no one will know they chased me," Basilio cautioned her.

"Why did Crispin stay?" asked Sisa, after dressing her son's wound.

Basilio hesitated a few moments, then with his arms about her and their tears mingling, he related little by little the story of the gold pieces, without speaking, however, of the tortures they were inflicting upon his young brother.

“My good Crispin! To accuse my good Crispin! It’s because we’re poor and we poor people have to endure everything!” murmured Sisa, staring through her tears at the light of the lamp, which was now dying out from lack of oil. So they remained silent for a while.

“Haven’t you had any supper yet? Here are rice and fish.”

“I don’t want anything, only a little water.”

“Yes,” answered his mother sadly, “I know that you don’t like dried fish. I had prepared something else, but your father came.”

“Father came?” asked Basilio, instinctively examining the face and hands of his mother.

The son’s questioning gaze pained Sisa’s heart, for she understood it only too well, so she added hastily: “He came and asked a lot about you and wanted to see you, and he was very hungry. He said that if you continued to be so good he would come back to stay with us.”

An exclamation of disgust from Basilio’s contracted lips interrupted her. “Son!” she reproached him.

“Forgive me, mother,” he answered seriously. “But aren’t we three better off—you, Crispin, and I? You’re crying—I haven’t said anything.”

Sisa sighed and asked, “Aren’t you going to eat? Then [114]let’s go to sleep, for it’s now very late.” She then closed up the hut and covered the few coals with ashes so that the fire would not die out entirely, just as a man does with his inner feelings; he covers them with the ashes of his life, which he calls indifference, so that they may not be deadened by daily contact with his fellows.

Basilio murmured his prayers and lay down near his mother, who was upon her knees praying. He felt hot and cold, he tried to close his eyes as he thought of his little brother who that night had expected to sleep in his mother’s lap and who now was probably trembling with terror and weeping

in some dark corner of the convento. His ears were again pierced with those cries he had heard in the church tower. But wearied nature soon began to confuse his ideas and the veil of sleep descended upon his eyes.

He saw a bedroom where two dim tapers burned. The curate, with a rattan whip in his hand, was listening gloomily to something that the senior sacristan was telling him in a strange tongue with horrible gestures. Crispin quailed and turned his tearful eyes in every direction as if seeking some one or some hiding-place. The curate turned toward him and called to him irritably, the rattan whistled. The child ran to hide himself behind the sacristan, who caught and held him, thus exposing him to the curate's fury. The unfortunate boy fought, kicked, screamed, threw himself on the floor and rolled about. He picked himself up, ran, slipped, fell, and parried the blows with his hands, which, wounded, he hid quickly, all the time shrieking with pain. Basilio saw him twist himself, strike the floor with his head, he saw and heard the rattan whistle. In desperation his little brother rose. Mad with pain he threw himself upon his tormentor and bit him on the hand. The curate gave a cry and dropped the rattan—the sacristan caught up a heavy cane and struck the boy a blow on the head so that he fell stunned —the curate, seeing him down, trampled him with his feet. [115]But the child no longer defended himself nor did he cry out; he rolled along the floor, a lifeless mass that left a damp track.1

Sisa's voice brought him back to reality. "What's the matter? Why are you crying?"

"I dreamed—O God!" exclaimed Basilio, sitting up, covered with perspiration. "It was a dream! Tell me, mother, that it was only a dream! Only a dream!"

"What did you dream?"

The boy did not answer, but sat drying his tears and wiping away the perspiration. The hut was in total darkness.

"A dream, a dream!" repeated Basilio in subdued tones.

"Tell me what you dreamed. I can't sleep," said his mother when he lay down again.

“Well,” he said in a low voice, “I dreamed that we had gone to glean the rice-stalks—in a field where there were many flowers—the women had baskets full of rice-stalks the men too had baskets full of rice-stalks—and the children too—I don’t remember any more, mother, I don’t remember the rest.”

Sisa had no faith in dreams, so she did not insist.

“Mother, I’ve thought of a plan tonight,” said Basilio after a few moments’ silence.

[116]“What is your plan?” she asked. Sisa was humble in everything, even with her own sons, trusting their judgment more than her own.
“I don’t want to be a sacristan any longer.”

“What?”

“Listen, mother, to what I’ve been thinking about. Today there arrived from Spain the son of the dead Don Rafael, and he will be a good man like his father. Well now, mother, tomorrow you will get Crispin, collect my wages, and say that I will not be a sacristan any longer. As soon as I get well I’ll go to see Don Crisostomo and ask him to hire me as a herdsman of his cattle and carabaos—I’m now big enough. Crispin can study with old Tasio, who does not whip and who is a good man, even if the curate does not believe so. What have we to fear now from the padre? Can he make us any poorer than we are? You may believe it, mother, the old man is good. I’ve seen him often in the church when no one else was about, kneeling and praying, believe it. So, mother, I’ll stop being a sacristan. I earn but little and that little is taken away from me in fines. Every one complains of the same thing. I’ll be a herdsman and by performing my tasks carefully I’ll make my employer like me. Perhaps he’ll let us milk a cow so that we can drink milk —Crispin likes milk so much. Who can tell! Maybe they’ll give us a little calf if they see that I behave well and we’ll take care of it and fatten it like our hen. I’ll pick fruits in the woods and sell them in the town along with the vegetables from our garden, so we’ll have money. I’ll set snares and traps to catch birds and wild cats,[2] I’ll fish in the river, and when I’m bigger, I’ll hunt. I’ll be able also to cut firewood to sell or to present to the owner of the cows, and so he’ll be satisfied with us. When I’m able to plow, I’ll ask him to let me have a piece of land to plant in sugar-cane or corn and

you won't have to sew until midnight. We'll [117]have new clothes for every fiesta, we'll eat meat and big fish, we'll live free, seeing each other every day and eating together. Old Tasio says that Crispin has a good head and so we'll send him to Manila to study. I'll support him by working hard. Isn't that fine, mother? Perhaps he'll be a doctor, what do you say?"
"What can I say but yes?" said Sisa as she embraced her son. She noted, however, that in their future the boy took no account of his father, and shed silent tears.

Basilio went on talking of his plans with the confidence of the years that see only what they wish for. To everything Sisa said yes—everything appeared good.

Sleep again began to weigh down upon the tired eyelids of the boy, and this time Ole-Luk-Oie, of whom Andersen tells us, spread over him his beautiful umbrella with its pleasing pictures. Now he saw himself with his little brother as they picked guavas, alpay, and other fruits in the woods; they clambered from branch to branch, light as butterflies; they penetrated into the caves and saw the shining rocks; they bathed in the springs where the sand was gold-dust and the stones like the jewels in the Virgin's crown. The little fishes sang and laughed, the plants bent their branches toward them laden with golden fruit. Then he saw a bell hanging in a tree with a long rope for ringing it; to the rope was tied a cow with a bird's nest between her horns and Crispin was inside the bell.

Thus he went on dreaming, while his mother, who was not of his age and who had not run for an hour, slept not.[118]

1Dream or reality, we do not know whether this may have happened to any Franciscan, but something similar is related of the Augustinian Padre Piernavieja.—*Author's note*.

Fray Antonio Piernavieja, O.S.A., was a parish curate in the province of Bulacan when this work was written. Later, on account of alleged brutality similar to the incident used here, he was transferred to the province of Cavite, where, in 1896, he was taken prisoner by the insurgents and by them made "bishop" of their camp. Having taken advantage of this position to collect and forward to the Spanish authorities in Manila information concerning the insurgents' preparations and plans, he was tied out in an open field and left to perish of hunger and thirst under the tropical sun. See *Guía Oficial de Filipinas*, 1885, p. 195; *El Katipunan ó El Filibusterismo en Filipinas* (Madrid, 1897), p. 347; Foreman's *The Philippine Islands*, Chap. XII.—TR.

2The Philippine civet-cat, quite rare, and the only wild carnivore in the Philippine Islands.—TR.

[Contents]

Chapter XVIII
Souls in Torment

It was about seven o'clock in the morning when Fray Salvi finished celebrating his last mass, having offered up three in the space of an hour. "The padre is ill," commented the pious women. "He doesn't move about with his usual slowness and elegance of manner."

He took off his vestments without the least comment, without saying a word or looking at any one. "Attention!" whispered the sacristans among themselves. "The devil's to pay! It's going to rain fines, and all on account of those two brothers."

He left the sacristy to go up into the rectory, in the hallway of which there awaited him some seven or eight women seated upon benches and a man who was pacing back and forth. Upon seeing him approach, the women arose and one of them pressed forward to kiss his hand, but the holy man made a sign of impatience that stopped her short.

"Can it be that you've lost a real, *kuriput?*" exclaimed the woman with a jesting laugh, offended at such a reception. "Not to give his hand to me, Matron of the Sisterhood, Sister Rufa!" It was an unheard-of proceeding.

"He didn't go into the confessional this morning," added Sister Sipa, a toothless old woman. "I wanted to confess myself so as to receive communion and get the indulgences."

"Well, I'm sorry for you," commented a young woman with a frank face. "This week I earned three plenary indulgences and dedicated them to the soul of my husband."

"Badly done, Sister Juana," said the offended Rufa. [119]"One plenary indulgence was enough to get him out of purgatory. You ought not to squander the holy indulgences. Do as I do."
"I thought, so many more the better," answered the simple Sister Juana, smiling. "But tell me what you do."

Sister Rufa did not answer at once. First, she asked for a buyo and chewed at it, gazed at her audience, which was listening attentively, then spat to one

side and commenced, chewing at the buyo meanwhile: “I don’t misspend one holy day! Since I’ve belonged to the Sisterhood I’ve earned four hundred and fifty-seven plenary indulgences, seven hundred sixty thousand five hundred and ninety-eight years of indulgence. I set down all that I earn, for I like to have clean accounts. I don’t want to cheat or be cheated.”

Here Sister Rufa paused to give more attention to her chewing. The women gazed at her in admiration, but the man who was pacing back and forth remarked with some disdain, “Well, this year I’ve gained four plenary indulgences more than you have, Sister Rufa, and a hundred years more, and that without praying much either.”

“More than I? More than six hundred and eighty-nine plenary indulgences or nine hundred ninety-four thousand eight hundred and fifty-six years?” queried Rufa, somewhat disgruntled.

“That’s it, eight indulgences and a hundred fifteen years more and a few months over,” answered the man, from whose neck hung soiled scapularies and rosaries.

“That’s not strange!” admitted Rufa, at last admitting defeat. “You’re an expert, the best in the province.”

The flattered man smiled and continued, “It isn’t so wonderful that I earn more than you do. Why, I can almost say that even when sleeping I earn indulgences.”

“And what do you do with them, sir?” asked four or five voices at the same time.

“Pish!” answered the man with a gesture of proud disdain. “I have them to throw away!”

[120]“But in that I can’t commend you, sir,” protested Rufa. “You’ll go to purgatory for wasting the indulgences. You know very well that for every idle word one must suffer forty days in fire, according to the curate; for every span of thread uselessly wasted, sixty days; and for every drop of water spilled, twenty. You’ll go to purgatory.”

“Well, I’ll know how to get out,” answered Brother Pedro with sublime confidence. “How many souls have I saved from the flames! How many

saints have I made! Besides, even *in articulo mortis* I can still earn, if I wish, at least seven plenary indulgences and shall be able to save others as I die." So saying, he strode proudly away.

Sister Rufa turned to the others: "Nevertheless, you must do as I do, for I don't lose a single day and I keep my accounts well. I don't want to cheat or be cheated."

"Well, what do you do?" asked Juana.

"You must imitate what I do. For example, suppose I earn a year of indulgence: I set it down in my account-book and say, 'Most Blessed Father and Lord St. Dominic, please see if there is anybody in purgatory who needs exactly a year—neither a day more nor a day less.' Then I play heads and tails: if it comes heads, no; if tails, yes. Let's suppose that it comes tails, then I write down *paid*; if it comes heads, then I keep the indulgence. In this way I arrange groups of a hundred years each, of which I keep a careful account. It's a pity that we can't do with them as with money—put them out at interest, for in that way we should be able to save more souls. Believe me, and do as I do."

"Well, I do it a better way," remarked Sister Sipa.

"What? Better?" demanded the astonished Rufa. "That can't be! My system can't be improved upon!"

"Listen a moment and you'll be convinced, Sister," said old Sipa in a tone of vexation.

"How is it? Let's hear!" exclaimed the others.

After coughing ceremoniously the old woman began with [121]great care: "You know very well that by saying the *Bendita sea tu pureza*and the *Señor mío Jesucristo, Padre dulcísimo por el gozo*, ten years are gained for each letter—"
"Twenty!" "No, less!" "Five!" interrupted several voices.

"A few years more or less make no difference. Now, when a servant breaks a plate, a glass, or a cup, I make him pick up the pieces; and for every scrap, even the very smallest, he has to recite for me one of those prayers. The

indulgences that I earn in this way I devote to the souls. Every one in my house, except the cats, understands this system."

"But those indulgences are earned by the servants and not by you, Sister Sipa," objected Rufa.

"And my cups and plates, who pays for them? The servants are glad to pay for them in that way and it suits me also. I never resort to blows, only sometimes a pinch, or a whack on the head."

"I'm going to do as you do!" "I'll do the same!" "And I!" exclaimed the women.

"But suppose the plate is only broken into two or three pieces, then you earn very few," observed the obstinate Rufa.

"*Abá!*" answered old Sipa. "I make them recite the prayers anyhow. Then I glue the pieces together again and so lose nothing."

Sister Rufa had no more objections left.

"Allow me to ask about a doubt of mine," said young Juana timidly. "You ladies understand so well these matters of heaven, purgatory, and hell, while I confess that I'm ignorant. Often I find in the novenas and other books this direction: three paternosters, three Ave Marias, and three Gloria Patris—"

"Yes, well?"

"Now I want to know how they should be recited: whether three paternosters in succession, three Ave Marias [122]in succession, and three Gloria Patris in succession; or a paternoster, an Ave Maria, and a Gloria Patri together, three times?"
"This way: a paternoster three times—"

"Pardon me, Sister Sipa," interrupted Rufa, "they must be recited in the other way. You mustn't mix up males and females. The paternosters are males, the Ave Marias are females, and the Gloria Patris are the children."

"Eh? Excuse me, Sister Rufa: paternoster, Ave Maria, and Gloria are like rice, meat, and sauce—a mouthful for the saints—"

“You’re wrong! You’ll see, for you who pray that way will never get what you ask for.”

“And you who pray the other way won’t get anything from your novenas,” replied old Sipa.

“Who won’t?” asked Rufa, rising. “A short time ago I lost a little pig, I prayed to St. Anthony and found it, and then I sold it for a good price. *Abá!*”

“Yes? Then that’s why one of your neighbors was saying that you sold a pig of hers.”

“Who? The shameless one! Perhaps I’m like you—”

Here the expert had to interfere to restore peace, for no one was thinking any more about paternosters—the talk was all about pigs. “Come, come, there mustn’t be any quarrel over a pig, Sisters! The Holy Scriptures give us an example to follow. The heretics and Protestants didn’t quarrel with Our Lord for driving into the water a herd of swine that belonged to them, and we that are Christians and besides, Brethren of the Holy Rosary, shall we have hard words on account of a little pig! What would our rivals, the Tertiary Brethren, say?”

All became silent before such wisdom, at the same time fearing what the Tertiary Brethren might say. The expert, well satisfied with such acquiescence, changed his tone and continued: “Soon the curate will send for us. We must tell him which preacher we’ve chosen of the [123]three that he suggested yesterday, whether Padre Damaso, Padre Martin, or the coadjutor. I don’t know whether the Tertiary Brethren have yet made any choice, so we must decide.”
“The coadjutor,” murmured Juana timidly.

“Ahem! The coadjutor doesn’t know how to preach,” declared Sipa. “Padre Martin is better.”

“Padre Martin!” exclaimed another disdainfully. “He hasn’t any voice. Padre Damaso would be better.”

“That’s right!” cried Rufa. “Padre Damaso surely does know how to preach! He looks like a comedian!”

“But we don’t understand him,” murmured Juana.

“Because he’s very deep! And as he preaches well—”

This speech was interrupted by the arrival of Sisa, who was carrying a basket on her head. She saluted the Sisters and went on up the stairway.

“She’s going in! Let’s go in too!” they exclaimed. Sisa felt her heart beating violently as she ascended the stairs. She did not know just what to say to the padre to placate his wrath or what reasons she could advance in defense of her son. That morning at the first flush of dawn she had gone into her garden to pick the choicest vegetables, which she placed in a basket among banana-leaves and flowers; then she had looked along the bank of the river for the *pakó* which she knew the curate liked for salads. Putting on her best clothes and without awakening her son, she had set out for the town with the basket on her head. As she went up the stairway she, tried to make as little noise as possible and listened attentively in the hope that she might hear a fresh, childish voice, so well known to her. But she heard nothing nor did she meet any one as she made her way to the kitchen. There she looked into all the corners. The servants and sacristans received her coldly, scarcely acknowledging her greeting.

“Where can I put these vegetables?” she asked, not taking any offense at their coldness.

“There, anywhere!” growled the cook, hardly looking [124]at her as he busied himself in picking the feathers from a capon.
With great care Sisa arranged the vegetables and the salad leaves on the table, placing the flowers above them. Smiling, she then addressed one of the servants, who seemed to be more approachable than the cook: “May I speak with the padre?”

“He’s sick,” was the whispered answer.

“And Crispin? Do you know if he is in the sacristy?” The servant looked surprised and wrinkled his eyebrows. “Crispin? Isn’t he at your house? Do you mean to deny it?”

“Basilio is at home, but Crispin stayed here,” answered Sisa, “and I want to see him.”

“Yes, he stayed, but afterwards he ran away, after stealing a lot of things. Early this morning the curate ordered me to go and report it to the Civil Guard. They must have gone to your house already to hunt for the boys.”

Sisa covered her ears and opened her mouth to speak, but her lips moved without giving out any sound.

“A pretty pair of sons you have!” exclaimed the cook. “It’s plain that you’re a faithful wife, the sons are so like the father. Take care that the younger doesn’t surpass him.”

Sisa broke out into bitter weeping and let herself fall upon a bench.

“Don’t cry here!” yelled the cook. “Don’t you know that the padre’s sick? Get out in the street and cry!”

The unfortunate mother was almost shoved down the stairway at the very time when the Sisters were coming down, complaining and making conjectures about the curate’s illness, so she hid her face in her pañuelo and suppressed the sounds of her grief. Upon reaching the street she looked about uncertainly for a moment and then, as if having reached a decision, walked rapidly away.[125]
[Contents]

Chapter XIX
A Schoolmaster's Difficulties

El vulgo es necio y pues lo paga, es justo
Hablarle en necio para darle el gusto.1
LOPE DE VEGA.

The mountain-encircled lake slept peacefully with that hypocrisy of the elements which gave no hint of how its waters had the night before responded to the fury of the storm. As the first reflections of light awoke on its surface the phosphorescent spirits, there were outlined in the distance, almost on the horizon, the gray silhouettes of the little bankas of the fishermen who were taking in their nets and of the larger craft spreading their sails. Two men dressed in deep mourning stood gazing at the water from a little elevation: one was Ibarra and the other a youth of humble aspect and melancholy features.

"This is the place," the latter was saying. "From here your father's body was thrown into the water. Here's where the grave-digger brought Lieutenant Guevara and me."

Ibarra warmly grasped the hand of the young man, who went on: "You have no occasion to thank me. I owed many favors to your father, and the only thing that I could do for him was to accompany his body to the grave. I came here without knowing any one, without recommendation, and having neither name nor fortune, just as at present. My predecessor had abandoned the school to engage in the tobacco trade. Your father protected me, secured me a house, and furnished whatever was necessary [126]for running the school. He used to visit the classes and distribute pictures among the poor but studious children, as well as provide them with books and paper. But this, like all good things, lasted only a little while."
Ibarra took off his hat and seemed to be praying for a time. Then he turned to his companion: "Did you say that my father helped the poor children? And now?"

"Now they get along as well as possible and write when they can," answered the youth.

"What is the reason?"

“The reason lies in their torn camisas and their downcast eyes.”

“How many pupils have you now?” asked Ibarra with interest, after a pause.

“More than two hundred on the roll but only about twenty-five in actual attendance.”

“How does that happen?”

The schoolmaster smiled sadly as he answered, “To tell you the reasons would make a long and tiresome story.”

“Don’t attribute my question to idle curiosity,” replied Ibarra gravely, while he stared at the distant horizon. “I’ve thought better of it and believe that to carry out my father’s ideas will be more fitting than to weep for him, and far better than to revenge him. Sacred nature has become his grave, and his enemies were the people and a priest. The former I pardon on account of their ignorance and the latter because I wish that Religion, which elevated society, should be respected. I wish to be inspired with the spirit of him who gave me life and therefore desire to know about the obstacles encountered here in educational work.”

“The country will bless your memory, sir,” said the schoolmaster, “if you carry out the beautiful plans of your dead father! You wish to know the obstacles which the progress of education meets? Well then, under present circumstances, without substantial aid education will never amount to much; in the very first place because, even when [127]we have the pupils, lack of suitable means, and other things that attract them more, kill off their interest. It is said that in Germany a peasant’s son studies for eight years in the town school, but who here would spend half that time when such poor results are to be obtained? They read, write, and memorize selections, and sometimes whole books, in Spanish, without understanding a single word.[2] What benefit does our country child get from the school?”
“And why have you, who see the evil, not thought of remedying it?”

The schoolmaster shook his head sadly. “A poor teacher struggles not only against prejudices but also against certain influences. First, it would be necessary to have a suitable place and not to do as I must at present—hold the classes under the convento by the side of the padre’s carriage. There the children, who like to read aloud, very naturally disturb the padre, and he

often comes down, nervous, especially when he has his attacks, yells at them, and even insults me at times. You know that no one can either teach or learn under such circumstances, for the child will not respect his teacher when he sees him abused without standing up for his rights. In order to be heeded and to maintain his authority the teacher needs prestige, reputation, moral strength, and some freedom of action.

[128]"Now let me recount to you even sadder details. I have wished to introduce reforms and have been laughed at. In order to remedy the evil of which I just spoke to you, I tried to teach Spanish to the children because, in addition to the fact that the government so orders, I thought also that it would be of advantage for everybody. I used the simplest method of words and phrases without paying any attention to long rules, expecting to teach them grammar when they should understand the language. At the end of a few weeks some of the brightest were almost able to understand me and could use a few phrases."

The schoolmaster paused and seemed to hesitate, then, as if making a resolution, he went on: "I must not be ashamed of the story of my wrongs, for any one in my place would have acted the same as I did. As I said, it was a good beginning, but a few days afterwards Padre Damaso, who was the curate then, sent for me by the senior sacristan. Knowing his disposition and fearing to make him wait, I went upstairs at once, saluted him, and wished him good-morning in Spanish. His only greeting had been to put out his hand for me to kiss, but at this he drew it back and without answering me began to laugh loud and mockingly. I was very much embarrassed, as the senior sacristan was present. At the moment I didn't know just what to say, for the curate continued his laughter and I stood staring at him. Then I began to get impatient and saw that I was about to do something indiscreet, since to be a good Christian and to preserve one's dignity are not incompatible. I was going to put a question to him when suddenly, passing from ridicule to insult, he said sarcastically, 'So it's *buenos dins, eh? Buenos dias!* How nice that you know how to talk Spanish!' Then again he broke out into laughter."

Ibarra was unable to repress a smile.

"You smile," continued the schoolmaster, following Ibarra's example, "but I must confess that at the time I had very little desire to laugh. I was still

standing—I [129]felt the blood rush to my head and lightning seemed to flash through my brain. The curate I saw far, far away. I advanced to reply to him without knowing just what I was going to say, but the senior sacristan put himself between us. Padre Damaso arose and said to me in Tagalog: 'Don't try to shine in borrowed finery. Be content to talk your own dialect and don't spoil Spanish, which isn't meant for you. Do you know the teacher Ciruela?3 Well, Ciruela was a teacher who didn't know how to read, and he had a school.' I wanted to detain him, but he went into his bedroom and slammed the door.

"What was I to do with only my meager salary, to collect which I have to get the curate's approval and make a trip to the capital of the province, what could I do against him, the foremost religious and political power in the town, backed up by his Order, feared by the government, rich, powerful, sought after and listened to, always believed and heeded by everybody? Although he insulted me, I had to remain silent, for if I replied he would have had me removed from my position, by which I should lose all hope in my chosen profession. Nor would the cause of education gain anything, but the opposite, for everybody would take the curate's side, they would curse me and call me presumptuous, proud, vain, a bad Christian, uncultured, and if not those things, then anti-Spanish and a filibuster. Of a schoolmaster neither learning nor zeal is expected; resignation, humility, and inaction only are asked. May God pardon me if I have gone against my conscience and my judgement, but I was born in this country, I have to live, I have a mother, so I have abandoned myself to my fate like a corpse tossed about by the waves."

"Did this difficulty discourage you for all time? Have you lived so since?"

"Would that it had been a warning to me! If only [130]my troubles had been limited to that! It is true that from that time I began to dislike my profession and thought of seeking some other occupation, as my predecessor had done, because any work that is done in disgust and shame is a kind of martyrdom and because every day the school recalled the insult to my mind, causing me hours of great bitterness. But what was I to do? I could not undeceive my mother, I had to say to her that her three years of sacrifice to give me this profession now constituted my happiness. It is necessary to make her believe that this profession is most honorable, the work delightful, the way strewn with flowers, that the performance of my duties brings me only

friendship, that the people respect me and show me every consideration. By doing otherwise, without ceasing to be unhappy myself, I should have caused more sorrow, which besides being useless would also be a sin. I stayed on, therefore, and tried not to feel discouraged. I tried to struggle on."

Here he paused for a while, then resumed: "From the day on which I was so grossly insulted I began to examine myself and I found that I was in fact very ignorant. I applied myself day and night to the study of Spanish and whatever concerned my profession. The old Sage lent me some books, and I read and pondered over everything that I could get hold of. With the new ideas that I have been acquiring in one place and another my point of view has changed and I have seen many things under a different aspect from what they had appeared to me before. I saw error where before I had seen only truth, and truth in many things where I had formerly seen only error. Corporal punishment, for example, which from time immemorial has been the distinctive feature in the schools and which has heretofore been considered as the only efficacious means of making pupils learn—so we have been accustomed to believe—soon appeared to me to be a great hindrance rather than in any way an aid to the child's progress. I became convinced that it was impossible to use one's mind [131]properly when blows, or similar punishment, were in prospect. Fear and terror disturb the most serene, and a child's imagination, besides being very lively, is also very impressionable. As it is on the brain that ideas are impressed, it is necessary that there be both inner and outer calm, that there be serenity of spirit, physical and moral repose, and willingness, so I thought that before everything else I should cultivate in the children confidence, assurance, and some personal pride. Moreover, I comprehended that the daily sight of floggings destroyed kindness in their hearts and deadened all sense of dignity, which is such a powerful lever in the world. At the same time it caused them to lose their sense of shame, which is a difficult thing to restore. I have also observed that when one pupil is flogged, he gets comfort from the fact that the others are treated in the same way, and that he smiles with satisfaction upon hearing the wails of the others. As for the person who does the flogging, while at first he may do it with repugnance, he soon becomes hardened to it and even takes delight in his gloomy task. The past filled me with horror, so I wanted to save the present by modifying the old system. I endeavored to make study a thing of love and joy, I wished to

make the primer not a black book bathed in the tears of childhood but a friend who was going to reveal wonderful secrets, and of the schoolroom not a place of sorrows but a scene of intellectual refreshment. So, little by little, I abolished corporal punishment, taking the instruments of it entirely away from the school and replacing them with emulation and personal pride. If one was careless about his lesson, I charged it to lack of desire and never to lack of capacity. I made them think that they were more capable than they really were, which urged them on to study just as any confidence leads to notable achievements. At first it seemed that the change of method was impracticable; many ceased their studies, but I persisted and observed that little by little their minds were being elevated and that more children came, that they [132]came with more regularity, and that he who was praised in the presence of the others studied with double diligence on the next day.

"It soon became known throughout the town that I did not whip the children. The curate sent for me, and fearing another scene I greeted him curtly in Tagalog. On this occasion he was very serious with me. He said that I was exposing the children to destruction, that I was wasting time, that I was not fulfilling my duties, that the father who spared the rod was spoiling the child—according to the Holy Ghost—that learning enters with blood, and so on. He quoted to me sayings of barbarous times just as if it were enough that a thing had been said by the ancients to make it indisputable; according to which we ought to believe that there really existed those monsters which in past ages were imaged and sculptured in the palaces and temples. Finally, he charged me to be more careful and to return to the old system, otherwise he would make unfavorable report about me to the alcalde of the province. Nor was this the end of my troubles. A few days afterward some of the parents of the children presented themselves under the convento and I had to call to my aid all my patience and resignation. They began by reminding me of former times when teachers had character and taught as their grandfathers had. 'Those indeed were the times of the wise men,' they declared, 'they whipped, and straightened the bent tree. They were not boys but old men of experience, gray-haired and severe. Don Catalino, king of them all and founder of this very school, used to administer no less than twenty-five blows and as a result his pupils became wise men and priests. Ah, the old people were worth more than we ourselves, yes, sir, more than we ourselves!' Some did not content themselves with such indirect rudeness, but told me plainly that

if I continued my system their children would learn nothing and that they would be obliged to take them from the school It was useless to argue with them, for as a [133]young man they thought me incapable of sound judgment. What would I not have given for some gray hairs! They cited the authority of the curate, of this one and that one, and even called attention to themselves, saying that if it had not been for the whippings they had received from their teachers they would never have learned anything. Only a few persons showed any sympathy to sweeten for me the bitterness of such a disillusioning.

"In view of all this I had to give up my system, which, after so much toil, was just beginning to produce results. In desperation I carried the whips bank to the school the next day and began the barbarous practice again. Serenity disappeared and sadness reigned in the faces of the children, who had just begun to care for me, and who were my only kindred and friends. Although I tried to spare the whippings and to administer them with all the moderation possible, yet the children felt the change keenly, they became discouraged and wept bitterly. It touched my heart, and even though in my own mind I was vexed with the stupid parents, still I was unable to take any spite out on those innocent victims of their parents' prejudices. Their tears burned me, my heart seemed bursting from my breast, and that day I left the school before closing-time to go home and weep alone. Perhaps my sensitiveness may seem strange to you, but if you had been in my place you would understand it. Old Don Anastasio said to me, 'So the parents want floggings? Why not inflict them on themselves?' As a result of it all I became sick." Ibarra was listening thoughtfully.

"Scarcely had I recovered when I returned to the school to find the number of my pupils reduced to a fifth. The better ones had run away upon the return to the old system, and of those who remained—mostly those who came to school to escape work at home—not one showed any joy, not one congratulated me on my recovery. It would have been the same to them whether I got well or not, or they might have preferred that I continue sick since my [134]substitute, although he whipped them more, rarely went to the school. My other pupils, those whose parents had obliged them to attend school, had gone to other places. Their parents blamed me for having spoiled them and heaped reproaches on me for it. One, however, the son of a country woman who visited me during my illness, had not returned on

account of having been made a sacristan, and the senior sacristan says that the sacristans must not attend school: they would be dismissed."
"Were you resigned in looking after your new pupils?" asked Ibarra.

"What else could I do?" was the queried reply. "Nevertheless, during my illness many things had happened, among them a change of curates, so I took new hope and made another attempt to the end that the children should not lose all their time and should, in so far as possible, get some benefit from the floggings, that such things might at least have some good result for them. I pondered over the matter, as I wished that even if they could not love me, by getting something useful from me, they might remember me with less bitterness. You know that in nearly all the schools the books are in Spanish, with the exception of the catechism in Tagalog, which varies according to the religious order to which the curate belongs. These books are generally novenas, canticles, and the Catechism of Padre Astete,[4] from which they learn about as much piety as they would from the books of heretics. Seeing the impossibility of teaching the pupils in Spanish or of translating so many books, I tried to substitute short passages from useful works in Tagalog, such as the Treatise on Manners by Hortensio y Feliza, some manuals of Agriculture, and so forth. Sometimes I would myself translate simple works, such as Padre Barranera's [135]History of the Philippines, which I then dictated to the children, with at times a few observations of my own, so that they might make note-books. As I had no maps for teaching geography, I copied one of the province that I saw at the capital and with this and the tiles of the floor I gave them some idea of the country. This time it was the women who got excited. The men contented themselves with smiling, as they saw in it only one of my vagaries. The new curate sent for me, and while he did not reprimand me, yet he said that I should first take care of religion, that before learning such things the children must pass an examination to show that they had memorized the mysteries, the canticles, and the catechism of Christian Doctrine.
"So then, I am now working to the end that the children become changed into parrots and know by heart so many things of which they do not understand a single word. Many of them now know the mysteries and the canticles, but I fear that my efforts will come to grief with the Catechism of Padre Astete, since the greater part of the pupils do not distinguish between the questions and the answers, nor do they understand what either may

mean. Thus we shall die, thus those unborn will do, while in Europe they will talk of progress."

"Let's not be so pessimistic," said Ibarra. "The teniente-mayor has sent me an invitation to attend a meeting in the town hall. Who knows but that there you may find an answer to your questions?"

The schoolmaster shook his head in doubt as he answered: "You'll see how the plan of which they talked to me meets the same fate as mine has. But yet, let us see!"[136]

1The common crowd is a fool and since it pays for it, it is proper to talk to it foolishly to please it.

2"The schools are under the inspection of the parish priests. Reading and writing in Spanish are taught, or at least it is so ordered; but the schoolmaster himself usually does not know it, and on the other hand the Spanish government employees do not understand the vernacular. Besides, the curates, in order to preserve their influence intact, do not look favorably upon the spread of Castilian. About the only ones who know Spanish are the Indians who have been in the service of Europeans. The first reading exercise is some devotional book, then the catechism; the reader is called *Casaysayan*. On the average half of the children between seven and ten years attend school; they learn to read fairly well and some to write a little, but they soon forget it."—Jagor, *Viajes por Filipinas* (Vidal's Spanish version). Jagor was speaking particularly of the settled parts of the Bicol region. Referring to the islands generally, his "half of the children" would be a great exaggeration.—TR.

3A delicate bit of sarcasm is lost in the translation here. The reference to *Maestro Ciruela* in Spanish is somewhat similar to a mention in English of Mr. Squeers, of Dotheboys Hall fame.—TR.

4By one of the provisions of a royal decree of December 20, 1863, the *Catecismo de la Doctrina Cristina*, by Gaspar Astete, was prescribed as the text-book for primary schools, in the Philippines. See Blair and Robertson's *The Philippine Islands*, Vol. XLVI, p. 98; *Census of the Philippine Islands* (Washington, 1905), p. 584.—TR.

[Contents]

Chapter XX
The Meeting in the Town Hall

The hall was about twelve to fifteen meters long by eight to ten wide. Its whitewashed walls were covered with drawings in charcoal, more or less ugly and obscene, with inscriptions to complete their meanings. Stacked neatly against the wall in one corner were to be seen about a dozen old flint-locks among rusty swords and talibons, the armament of the cuadrilleros.1 At one end of the hall there hung, half hidden by soiled red curtains, a picture of his Majesty, the King of Spain. Underneath this picture, upon a wooden platform, an old chair spread out its broken arms. In front of the chair was a wooden table spotted with ink stains and whittled and carved with inscriptions and initials like the tables in the German taverns frequented by students. Benches and broken chairs completed the furniture.

This is the hall of council, of judgment, and of torture, wherein are now gathered the officials of the town and its dependent villages. The faction of old men does not mix with that of the youths, for they are mutually hostile. They represent respectively the conservative and the liberal [137]parties, save that their disputes assume in the towns an extreme character.

"The conduct of the gobernadorcillo fills me with distrust," Don Filipo, the teniente-mayor and leader of the liberal faction, was saying to his friends. "It was a deep-laid scheme, this thing of putting off the discussion of expenses until the eleventh hour. Remember that we have scarcely eleven days left."

"And he has staved at the convento to hold a conference with the curate, who is sick," observed one of the youths.

"It doesn't matter," remarked another. "We have everything prepared. Just so the plan of the old men doesn't receive a majority—"

"I don't believe it will," interrupted Don Filipo, "as I shall present the plan of the old men myself!"

"What! What are you saying?" asked his surprised hearers.

"I said that if I speak first I shall present the plan of our rivals."

“But what about our plan?”

“I shall leave it to you to present ours,” answered Don Filipo with a smile, turning toward a youthful cabeza de barangay.2 “You will propose it after I have been defeated.”

“We don’t understand you, sir,” said his hearers, staring at him with doubtful looks.

“Listen,” continued the liberal leader in a low voice to several near him. “This morning I met old Tasio and the old man said to me: ‘Your rivals hate you more than they do your ideas. Do you wish that a thing shall [138]not be done? Then propose it yourself, and though it were more useful than a miter, it would be rejected. Once they have defeated you, have the least forward person in the whole gathering propose what you want, and your rivals, in order to humiliate you, will accept it.’ But keep quiet about it.”
“But—”

“So I will propose the plan of our rivals and exaggerate it to the point of making it ridiculous. Ah, here come Señor Ibarra and the schoolmaster.”

These two young men saluted each of the groups without joining either. A few moments later the gobernadorcillo, the very same individual whom we saw yesterday carrying a bundle of candles, entered with a look of disgust on his face. Upon his entrance the murmurs ceased, every one sat down, and silence was gradually established, as he took his seat under the picture of the King, coughed four or five times, rubbed his hand over his face and head, rested his elbows on the table, then withdrew them, coughed once more, and then the whole thing over again.

“Gentlemen,” he at last began in an unsteady voice, “I have been so bold as to call you together here for this meeting—ahem! Ahem! We have to celebrate the fiesta of our patron saint, San Diego, on the twelfth of this month—ahem!—today is the second—ahem! Ahem!” At this point a slow, dry cough cut off his speech.

A man of proud bearing, apparently about forty years of age, then arose from the bench of the elders. He was the rich Capitan Basilio, the direct contrast of Don Rafael, Ibarra’s father. He was a man who maintained that after the death of St. Thomas Aquinas the world had made no more

progress, and that since St. John Lateran had left it, humanity had been retrograding.

“Gentlemen, allow me to speak a few words about such an interesting matter,” he began. “I speak first even though there are others here present who have more right to do so than I have, but I speak first because in these [139]matters it seems to me that by speaking first one does not take the first place—no more than that by speaking last does one become the least. Besides, the things that I have to say are of such importance that they should not be put off or last spoken of, and accordingly I wish to speak first in order to give them due weight. So you will allow me to speak first in this meeting where I see so many notable persons, such as the present señor capitan, the former capitan; my distinguished friend, Don Valentin, a former capitan; the friend of my infancy, Don Julio; our celebrated captain of cuadrilleros, Don Melchor; and many other personages, whom, for the sake of brevity, I must omit to enumerate—all of whom you see present here. I beg of you that I may be allowed a few words before any one else speaks. Have I the good fortune to see my humble request granted by the meeting?” Here the orator with a faint smile inclined his head respectfully. “Go on, you have our undivided attention!” said the notables alluded to and some others who considered Capitan Basilio a great orator. The elders coughed in a satisfied way and rubbed their hands. After wiping the perspiration from his brow with a silk handkerchief, he then proceeded:

“Now that you have been so kind and complaisant with my humble self as to grant me the use of a few words before any one else of those here present, I shall take advantage of this permission, so generously granted, and shall talk. In imagination I fancy myself in the midst of the august Roman senate, *senatus populusque romanus*, as was said in those happy days which, unfortunately for humanity, will nevermore return. I propose to the *Patres Conscripti*, as the learned Cicero would say if he were in my place, I propose, in view of the short time left, and time is money as Solomon said, that concerning this important matter each one set forth his opinion clearly, briefly, and simply.”

Satisfied with himself and flattered by the attention in [140]the hall, the orator took his seat, not without first casting a glance of superiority toward Ibarra, who was seated in a corner, and a significant look at his friends as if

to say, “Aha! Haven’t I spoken well?” His friends reflected both of these expressions by staring at the youths as though to make them die of envy.
“Now any one may speak who wishes that—ahem!” began the gobernadorcillo, but a repetition of the cough and sighs cut short the phrase.

To judge from the silence, no one wished to consider himself called upon as one of the Conscript Fathers, since no one rose. Then Don Filipo seized the opportunity and rose to speak. The conservatives winked and made significant signs to each other.

“I rise, gentlemen, to present my estimate of expenses for the fiesta,” he began. “We can’t allow it,” commented a consumptive old man, who was an irreconcilable conservative.

“We’ll vote against it,” corroborated others. “Gentlemen!” exclaimed Don Filipo, repressing a smile, “I haven’t yet made known the plan which we, *the younger men*, bring here. We feel *sure* that this great plan will be preferred by all over any other that our opponents think of or are capable of conceiving.”

This presumptuous exordium so thoroughly irritated the minds of the conservatives that they swore in their hearts to offer determined opposition.

“We have estimated three thousand five hundred pesos for the expenses,” went on Don Filipo. “Now then, with such a sum we shall be able to celebrate a fiesta that will eclipse in magnificence any that has been seen up to this time in our own or neighboring provinces.”

“Ahem!” coughed some doubters. “The town of A——— has five thousand, B——— has four thousand, ahem! Humbug!”

“Listen to me, gentlemen, and I’ll convince you,” continued the unterrified speaker. “I propose that we erect [141]a theater in the middle of the plaza, to cost one hundred and fifty pesos.”
“That won’t be enough! It’ll take one hundred and sixty,” objected a confirmed conservative.

“Write it down, Señor Director, two hundred pesos for the theater,” said Don Filipo. “I further propose that we contract with a troupe of comedians from Tondo for seven performances on seven successive nights. Seven

performances at two hundred pesos a night make fourteen hundred pesos. Write down fourteen hundred pesos, Señor Director!"

Both the elders and the youths stared in amazement. Only those in the secret gave no sign.

"I propose besides that we have magnificent fireworks; no little lights and pin-wheels such as please children and old maids, nothing of the sort. We want big bombs and immense rockets. I propose two hundred big bombs at two pesos each and two hundred rockets at the same price. We'll have them made by the pyrotechnists of Malabon."

"Huh!" grunted an old man, "a two-peso bomb doesn't frighten or deafen me! They ought to be three-peso ones."

"Write down one thousand pesos for two hundred bombs and two hundred rockets."

The conservatives could no longer restrain themselves. Some of them rose and began to whisper together. "Moreover, in order that our visitors may see that we are a liberal people and have plenty of money," continued the speaker, raising his voice and casting a rapid glance at the whispering group of elders, "I propose: first, four *hermanos mayores*3 for the two days of the fiesta; and second, that each day there be thrown into the lake two hundred fried chickens, one hundred stuffed capons, and [142]forty roast pigs, as did Sylla, a contemporary of that Cicero, of whom Capitan Basilio just spoke."
"That's it, like Sylla," repeated the flattered Capitan Basilio.

The surprise steadily increased.

"Since many rich people will attend and each one will bring thousands of pesos, his best game-cocks, and his playing-cards, I propose that the cockpit run for fifteen days and that license be granted to open all gambling houses —"

The youths interrupted him by rising, thinking that he had gone crazy. The elders were arguing heatedly.

"And, finally, that we may not neglect the pleasures of the soul—"

The murmurs and cries which arose all over the hall drowned his voice out completely, and tumult reigned.

“No!” yelled an irreconcilable conservative. “I don’t want him to flatter himself over having run the whole fiesta, no! Let me speak! Let me speak!”

“Don Filipo has deceived us,” cried the liberals. “We’ll vote against his plan. He has gone over to the old men. We’ll vote against him!”

The gobernadorcillo, more overwhelmed than ever, did nothing to restore order, but rather was waiting for them to restore it themselves.

The captain of the cuadrilleros begged to be heard and was granted permission to speak, but he did not open his mouth and sat down again confused and ashamed.

By good fortune, Capitan Valentin, the most moderate of all the conservatives, arose and said: “We cannot agree to what the teniente-mayor has proposed, as it appears to be exaggerated. So many bombs and so many nights of theatrical performances can only be desired by a young man, such as he is, who can spend night after night sitting up and listening to so many explosions without becoming deaf. I have consulted the opinion of the sensible persons here and all of them unanimously disapprove Don Filipo’s plan. Is it not so, gentlemen?”

[143]“Yes, yes!” cried the youths and elders with one voice. The youths were delighted to hear an old man speak so.
“What are we going to do with four *hermanos mayores?*” went on the old man. “What is the meaning of those chickens, capons, and roast pigs, thrown into the lake? ‘Humbug!’ our neighbors would say. And afterwards we should have to fast for six months! What have we to do with Sylla and the Romans? Have they ever invited us to any of their festivities, I wonder? I, at least, have never received any invitation from them, and you can all see that I’m an old man!”

“The Romans live in Rome, where the Pope is,” Capitan Basilio prompted him in a low voice. “Now I understand!” exclaimed the old man calmly.

“They would make of their festivals watch-meetings, and the Pope would order them to throw their food into the sea so that they might commit no

sin. But, in spite of all that, your plan is inadmissible, impossible, a piece of foolishness!"

Being so stoutly opposed, Don Filipo had to withdraw his proposal. Now that their chief rival had been defeated, even the worst of the irreconcilable insurgents looked on with calmness while a young cabeza de barangay asked for the floor.

"I beg that you excuse the boldness of one so young as I am in daring to speak before so many persons respected for their age and prudence and judgment in affairs, but since the eloquent orator, Capitan Basilio, has requested every one to express his opinion, let the authoritative words spoken by him excuse my insignificance."

The conservatives nodded their heads with satisfaction, remarking to one another: "This young man talks sensibly." "He's modest." "He reasons admirably."

"What a pity that he doesn't know very well how to gesticulate," observed Capitan Basilio. "But there's [144]time yet! He hasn't studied Cicero and he's still a young man!"

"If I present to you, gentlemen, any program or plan," the young man continued, "I don't do so with the thought that you will find it perfect or that you will accept it, but at the same time that I once more bow to the judgment of all of you, I wish to prove to our elders that our thoughts are always like theirs, since we take as our own those ideas so eloquently expressed by Capitan Basilio."

"Well spoken! Well spoken!" cried the flattered conservatives. Capitan Basilio made signs to the speaker showing him how he should stand and how he ought to move his arm. The only one remaining impassive was the gobernadorcillo, who was either bewildered or preoccupied; as a matter of fact, he seemed to be both. The young man went on with more warmth:

"My plan, gentlemen, reduces itself to this: invent new shows that are not common and ordinary, such as we see every day, and endeavor that the money collected may not leave the town, and that it be not wasted in smoke, but that it be used in some manner beneficial to all."

"That's right!" assented the youths. "That's what we want."

“Excellent!” added the elders.

“What should we get from a week of comedies, as the teniente-mayor proposes? What can we learn from the kings of Bohemia and Granada, who commanded that their daughters’ heads be cut off, or that they should be blown from a cannon, which later is converted into a throne? We are not kings, neither are we barbarians; we have no cannon, and if we should imitate those people, they would hang us on Bagumbayan. What are those princesses who mingle in the battles, scattering thrusts and blows about in combat with princes, or who wander alone over mountains and through valleys as though seduced by the *tikbálang*? Our nature is to love sweetness and tenderness in woman, and we would shudder at the thought of [145]taking the blood-stained hand of a maiden, even when the blood was that of a Moro or a giant, so abhorred by us. We consider vile the man who raises his hand against a woman, be he prince or alferez or rude countryman. Would it not be a thousand times better to give a representation of our own customs in order to correct our defects and vices and to encourage our better qualities?”
“That’s right! That’s right!” exclaimed some of his faction.

“He’s right,” muttered several old men thoughtfully.

“I should never have thought of that,” murmured Capitan Basilio.

“But how are you going to do it?” asked the irreconcilable.

“Very easily,” answered the youth. “I have brought here two dramas which I feel sure the good taste and recognized judgment of the respected elders here assembled will find very agreeable and entertaining. One is entitled ‘The Election of the Gobernadorcillo,’ being a comedy in prose in five acts, written by one who is here present. The other is in nine acts for two nights and is a fantastical drama of a satirical nature, entitled ‘Mariang Makiling,’[4] written by one of the best poets of the province. Seeing that the discussion of preparations for the fiesta has been postponed and fearing that there would not be time enough left, we have secretly secured the actors and had them learn their parts. We hope that with a week of rehearsal they will have plenty of time to know their parts thoroughly. This, gentlemen, besides being new, useful, and reasonable, has the great advantage of being

economical; we shall not need costumes, as those of our daily life will be suitable."

[146]"I'll pay for the theater!" shouted Capitan Basilio enthusiastically.
"If you need cuadrilleros, I'll lend you mine," cried their captain.

"And I—and I—if art old man is needed—" stammered another one, swelling with pride.

"Accepted! Accepted!" cried many voices.

Don Filipo became pale with emotion and his eyes filled with tears.

"He's crying from spite," thought the irreconcilable, so he yelled, "Accepted! Accepted without discussion!" Thus satisfied with revenge and the complete defeat of his rival, this fellow began to praise the young man's plan.

The latter continued his speech: "A fifth of the money collected may be used to distribute a few prizes, such as to the best school child, the best herdsman, farmer, fisherman, and so on. We can arrange for boat races on the river and lake and for horse races on shore, we can raise greased poles and also have other games in which our country people can take part. I concede that on account of our long-established customs we must have some fireworks; wheels and fire castles are very beautiful and entertaining, but I don't believe it necessary to have bombs, as the former speaker proposed. Two bands of music will afford sufficient merriment and thus we shall avoid those rivalries and quarrels between the poor musicians who come to gladden our fiesta with their work and who so often behave like fighting-cocks, afterwards going away poorly paid, underfed, and even bruised and wounded at times. With the money left over we can begin the erection of a small building for a schoolhouse, since we can't wait until God Himself comes down and builds one for us, and it is a sad state of affairs that while we have a fine cockpit our children study almost in the curate's stable. Such are the outlines of my plan; the details can be worked out by all."

A murmur of pleasure ran through the hall, as nearly every one agreed with the youth.

[147]Some few muttered, “Innovations! Innovations! When we were young —”

“Let’s adopt it for the time being and humiliate that fellow,” said others, indicating Don Filipo.

When silence was restored all were agreed. There was lacking only the approval of the gobernadorcillo. That worthy official was perspiring and fidgeting about. He rubbed his hand over his forehead and was at length able to stammer out in a weak voice: “I also agree, but—ahem!”

Every one in the hall listened in silence.

“But what?” asked Capitan Basilio.

“Very agreeable,” repeated the gobernadorcillo, “that is to say—I don’t agree—I mean—yes, but—” Here he rubbed his eyes with the back of his hand. “But the curate,” the poor fellow went on, “the curate wants something else.”

“Does the curate or do we ourselves pay for this fiesta? Has he given a cuarto for it?” exclaimed a penetrating voice. All looked toward the place whence these questions came and saw there the Sage Tasio.

Don Filipo remained motionless with his eyes fixed on the gobernadorcillo.

“What does the curate want?” asked Capitan Basilio.

“Well, the padre wants six processions, three sermons, three high masses, and if there is any money left, a comedy from Tondo with songs in the intermissions.”

“But we don’t want that,” said the youths and some of the old men.

“The curate wants it,” repeated the gobernadorcillo. “I’ve promised him that his wish shall be carried out.”

“Then why did you have us assemble here?”

“F-for the very purpose of telling you this!”

“Why didn’t you tell us so at the start?”

“I wanted to tell you, gentlemen, but Capitan Basilio spoke and I haven’t had a chance. The curate must be obeyed.”

[148]“He must be obeyed,” echoed several old men.
“He must be obeyed or else the alcalde will put us all in jail,” added several other old men sadly.

“Well then, obey him, and run the fiesta yourselves,” exclaimed the youths, rising. “We withdraw our contributions.”

“Everything has already been collected,” said the gobernadorcillo.

Don Filipo approached this official and said to him bitterly, “I sacrificed my pride in favor of a good cause; you are sacrificing your dignity as a man in favor of a bad one, and you’ve spoiled everything.”

Ibarra turned to the schoolmaster and asked him, “Is there anything that I can do for you at the capital of the province? I leave for there immediately.”

“Have you some business there?”

“We have business there!” answered Ibarra mysteriously.

On the way home, when Don Filipo was cursing his bad luck, old Tasio said to him: “The blame is ours! You didn’t protest when they gave you a slave for a chief, and I, fool that I am, had forgotten it!”[149]

1The municipal police of the old régime. They were thus described by a Spanish writer, W. E. Retana, in a note to Ventura F. Lopez’s *El Filibustero* (Madrid, 1893): “Municipal guards, whose duties are principally rural. Their uniform is a disaster; they go barefoot; on horseback, they hold the reins in the right hand and a lance in the left. They are usually good-for-nothing, but to their credit it must be said that they do no damage. Lacking military instruction, provided with fire-arms of the first part of the century, of which one in a hundred might go off in case of need, and for other arms bolos, talibons, old swords, etc., the cuadrilleros are truly a parody on armed force.”—TR.

2Headman and tax-collector of a district, generally including about fifty families, for whose annual tribute he was personally responsible. The “barangay” is a Malay boat of the kind supposed to have been used by the first emigrants to the Philippines. Hence, at first, the “head of a barangay” meant the leader or chief of a family or group of families. This office, quite analogous to the old Germanic or Anglo-Saxon “head of a hundred,” was adopted and perpetuated by the Spaniards in their system of local administration.—TR.

3The *hermano mayor* was a person appointed to direct the ceremonies during the fiesta, an appointment carrying with it great honor and importance, but also entailing considerable expense, as

the appointee was supposed to furnish a large share of the entertainments. Hence, the greater the number of *hermanos mayores* the more splendid the fiesta,—TR.

4Mt. Makiling is a volcanic cone at the southern end of the Lake of Bay. At its base is situated the town of Kalamba, the author's birthplace. About this mountain cluster a number of native legends having as their principal character a celebrated sorceress or enchantress, known as "Mariang Makiling."—TR.

[Contents]

Chapter XXI
The Story of a Mother

Andaba incierto—volaba errante,
Un solo instante—sin descansar.1
ALAEJOS.

Sisa ran in the direction of her home with her thoughts in that confused whirl which is produced in our being when, in the midst of misfortunes, protection and hope alike are gone. It is then that everything seems to grow dark around us, and, if we do see some faint light shining from afar, we run toward it, we follow it, even though an abyss yawns in our path. The mother wanted to save her sons, and mothers do not ask about means when their children are concerned. Precipitately she ran, pursued by fear and dark forebodings. Had they already arrested her son Basilio? Whither had her boy Crispin fled?

As she approached her little hut she made out above the garden fence the caps of two soldiers. It would be impossible to tell what her heart felt: she forgot everything. She was not ignorant of the boldness of those men, who did not lower their gaze before even the richest people of the town. What would they do now to her and to her sons, accused of theft! The civil-guards are not men, they are civil-guards; they do not listen to supplications and they are accustomed to see tears.

Sisa instinctively raised her eyes toward the sky, that sky which smiled with brilliance indescribable, and in whose transparent blue floated some little fleecy clouds. She stopped to control the trembling that had seized her whole body. The soldiers were leaving the house and were alone, [150]as they had arrested nothing more than the hen which Sisa had been fattening. She breathed more freely and took heart again. “How good they are and what kind hearts they have!” she murmured, almost weeping with joy. Had the soldiers burned her house but left her sons at liberty she would have heaped blessings upon them! She again looked gratefully toward the sky through which a flock of herons, those light clouds in the skies of the Philippines, were cutting their path, and with restored confidence she continued on her way. As she approached those fearful men she threw her glances in every direction as if unconcerned and pretended not to see her

hen, which was cackling for help. Scarcely had she passed them when she wanted to run, but prudence restrained her steps.
She had not gone far when she heard herself called by an imperious voice. Shuddering, she pretended not to hear, and continued on her way. They called her again, this time with a yell and an insulting epithet. She turned toward them, pale and trembling in spite of herself. One of them beckoned to her. Mechanically Sisa approached them, her tongue paralyzed with fear and her throat parched.

"Tell us the truth or we'll tie you to that tree and shoot you," said one of them in a threatening tone.

The woman stared at the tree.

"You're the mother of the thieves, aren't you?" asked the other.

"Mother of the thieves!" repeated Sisa mechanically.

"Where's the money your sons brought you last night?"

"Ah! The money—"

"Don't deny it or it'll be the worse for you," added the other. "We've come to arrest your sons, and the older has escaped from us. Where have you hidden the younger?"

Upon hearing this Sisa breathed more freely and answered, "Sir, it has been many days since I've seen Crispin. I expected to see him this morning at the convento, but there they only told me—"

[151]The two soldiers exchanged significant glances. "All right!" exclaimed one of them. "Give us the money and we'll leave you alone."
"Sir," begged the unfortunate woman, "my sons wouldn't steal even though they were starving, for we are used to that kind of suffering. Basilio didn't bring me a single cuarto. Search the whole house and if you find even a real, do with us what you will. Not all of us poor folks are thieves!"

"Well then," ordered the soldier slowly, as he fixed his gaze on Sisa's eyes, "come with us. Your sons will show up and try to get rid of the money they stole. Come on!"

“I—go with you?” murmured the woman, as she stepped backward and gazed fearfully at their uniforms. “And why not?”

“Oh, have pity on me!” she begged, almost on her knees. “I’m very poor, so I’ve neither gold nor jewels to offer you. The only thing I had you’ve already taken, and that is the hen which I was thinking of selling. Take everything that you find in the house, but leave me here in peace, leave me here to die!”

“Go ahead! You’re got to go, and if you don’t move along willingly, we’ll tie you.”

Sisa broke out into bitter weeping, but those men were inflexible. “At least, let me go ahead of you some distance,” she begged, when she felt them take hold of her brutally and push her along.

The soldiers seemed to be somewhat affected and, after whispering apart, one of them said: “All right, since from here until we get into the town, you might be able to escape, you’ll walk between us. Once there you may walk ahead twenty paces, but take care that you don’t delay and that you don’t go into any shop, and don’t stop. Go ahead, quickly!”

Vain were her supplications and arguments, useless her promises. The soldiers said that they had already compromised [152]themselves by having conceded too much. Upon finding herself between them she felt as if she would die of shame. No one indeed was coming along the road, but how about the air and the light of day? True shame encounters eyes everywhere. She covered her face with her pañuelo and walked along blindly, weeping in silence at her disgrace. She had felt misery and knew what it was to be abandoned by every one, even her own husband, but until now she had considered herself honored and respected: up to this time she had looked with compassion on those boldly dressed women whom the town knew as the concubines of the soldiers. Now it seemed to her that she had fallen even a step lower than they in the social scale.

The sound of hoofs was heard, proceeding from a small train of men and women mounted on poor nags, each between two baskets hung over the back of his mount; it was a party carrying fish to the interior towns. Some of them on passing her hut had often asked for a drink of water and had presented her with some fishes. Now as they passed her they seemed to beat

and trample upon her while their compassionate or disdainful looks penetrated through her pañuelo and stung her face. When these travelers had finally passed she sighed and raised the pañuelo an instant to see how far she still was from the town. There yet remained a few telegraph poles to be passed before reaching the *bantayan*, or little watch-house, at the entrance to the town. Never had that distance seemed so great to her.

Beside the road there grew a leafy bamboo thicket in whose shade she had rested at other times, and where her lover had talked so sweetly as he helped her carry her basket of fruit and vegetables. Alas, all that was past, like a dream! The lover had become her husband and a cabeza de barangay, and then trouble had commenced to knock at her door. As the sun was beginning to shine hotly, the soldiers asked her if she did not want to [153]rest there. "Thanks, no!" was the horrified woman's answer.
Real terror seized her when they neared the town. She threw her anguished gaze in all directions, but no refuge offered itself, only wide rice-fields, a small irrigating ditch, and some stunted trees; there was not a cliff or even a rock upon which she might dash herself to pieces! Now she regretted that she had come so far with the soldiers; she longed for the deep river that flowed by her hut, whose high and rock-strewn banks would have offered such a sweet death. But again the thought of her sons, especially of Crispin, of whose fate she was still ignorant, lightened the darkness of her night, and she was able to murmur resignedly, "Afterwards—afterwards—we'll go and live in the depths of the forest."

Drying her eyes and trying to look calm, she turned to her guards and said in a low voice, with an indefinable accent that was a complaint and a lament, a prayer and a reproach, sorrow condensed into sound, "Now we're in the town." Even the soldiers seemed touched as they answered her with a gesture. She struggled to affect a calm bearing while she went forward quickly.

At that moment the church bells began to peal out, announcing the end of the high mass. Sisa hurried her steps so as to avoid, if possible, meeting the people who were coming out, but in vain, for no means offered to escape encountering them. With a bitter smile she saluted two of her acquaintances, who merely turned inquiring glances upon her, so that to avoid further mortification she fixed her gaze on the ground, and yet, strange to say, she

stumbled over the stones in the road! Upon seeing her, people paused for a moment and conversed among themselves as they gazed at her, all of which she saw and felt in spite of her downcast eyes.

She heard the shameless tones of a woman who asked from behind at the top of her voice, “Where did you catch her? And the money?” It was a woman without [154]a tapis, or tunic, dressed in a green and yellow skirt and a camisa of blue gauze, easily recognizable from her costume as a *querida* of the soldiery. Sisa felt as if she had received a slap in the face, for that woman had exposed her before the crowd. She raised her eyes for a moment to get her fill of scorn and hate, but saw the people far, far away. Yet she felt the chill of their stares and heard their whispers as she moved over the ground almost without knowing that she touched it.
“Eh, this way!” a guard called to her. Like an automaton whose mechanism is breaking, she whirled about rapidly on her heels, then without seeing or thinking of anything ran to hide herself. She made out a door where a sentinel stood and tried to enter it, but a still more imperious voice called her aside. With wavering steps she sought the direction of that voice, then felt herself pushed along by the shoulders; she shut her eyes, took a couple of steps, and lacking further strength, let herself fall to the ground, first on her knees and then in a sitting posture. Dry and voiceless sobs shook her frame convulsively.

Now she was in the barracks among the soldiers, women, hogs, and chickens. Some of the men were sewing at their clothes while their thighs furnished pillows for their *queridas*, who were reclining on benches, smoking and gazing wearily at the ceiling. Other women were helping some of the men clean their ornaments and arms, humming doubtful songs the while.

“It seems that the chicks have escaped, for you’ve brought only the old hen!” commented one woman to the new arrivals,—whether alluding to Sisa or the still clucking hen is not certain.

“Yes, the hen is always worth more than the chicks,” Sisa herself answered when she observed that the soldiers were silent.

“Where’s the sergeant?” asked one of the guards in a disgusted tone. “Has report been made to the alferez yet?”

[155]A general shrugging of shoulders was his answer, for no one was going to trouble himself inquiring about the fate of a poor woman.
There Sisa spent two hours in a state of semi-idiocy, huddled in a corner with her head hidden in her arms and her hair falling down in disorder. At noon the alferez was informed, and the first thing that he did was to discredit the curate's accusation.

"Bah! Tricks of that rascally friar," he commented, as he ordered that the woman be released and that no one should pay any attention to the matter. "If he wants to get back what he's lost, let him ask St. Anthony or complain to the nuncio. Out with her!"

Consequently, Sisa was ejected from the barracks almost violently, as she did not try to move herself. Finding herself in the street, she instinctively started to hurry toward her house, with her head bared, her hair disheveled, and her gaze fixed on the distant horizon. The sun burned in its zenith with never a cloud to shade its flashing disk; the wind shook the leaves of the trees lightly along the dry road, while no bird dared stir from the shade of their branches.

At last Sisa reached her hut and entered it in silence, She walked all about it and ran in and out for a time. Then she hurried to old Tasio's house and knocked at the door, but he was not at home. The unhappy woman then returned to her hut and began to call loudly for Basilio and Crispin, stopping every few minutes to listen attentively. Her voice came back in an echo, for the soft murmur of the water in the neighboring river and the rustling of the bamboo leaves were the only sounds that broke the stillness. She called again and again as she climbed the low cliffs, or went down into a gully, or descended to the river. Her eyes rolled about with a sinister expression, now flashing up with brilliant gleams, now becoming obscured like the sky on a stormy night; it might be said that the light of reason was flickering and about to be extinguished.

[156]Again returning to her hut, she sat down on the mat where she had lain the night before. Raising her eyes, she saw a twisted remnant from Basilio's camisa at the end of the bamboo post in the *dinding*, or wall, that overlooked the precipice. She seized and examined it in the sunlight. There were blood stains on it, but Sisa hardly saw them, for she went outside and continued to raise and lower it before her eyes to examine it in the burning

sunlight. The light was failing and everything beginning to grow dark around her. She gazed wide-eyed and unblinkingly straight at the sun.

Still wandering about here and there, crying and wailing, she would have frightened any listener, for her voice now uttered rare notes such as are not often produced in the human throat. In a night of roaring tempest, when the whirling winds beat with invisible wings against the crowding shadows that ride upon it, if you should find yourself in a solitary and ruined building, you would hear moans and sighs which you might suppose to be the soughing of the wind as it beats on the high towers and moldering walls to fill you with terror and make you shudder in spite of yourself; as mournful as those unknown sounds of the dark night when the tempest roars were the accents of that mother. In this condition night came upon her. Perhaps Heaven had granted some hours of sleep while the invisible wing of an angel, brushing over her pallid countenance, might wipe out the sorrows from her memory; perhaps such suffering was too great for weak human endurance, and Providence had intervened with its sweet remedy, forgetfulness. However that may be, the next day Sisa wandered about smiling, singing, and talking with all the creatures of wood and field.[157]

1With uncertain pace, in wandering flight, for an instant only—without rest.

[Contents]

Chapter XXII
Lights and Shadows

Three days have passed since the events narrated, three days which the town of San Diego has devoted to making preparations for the fiesta, commenting and murmuring at the same time. While all were enjoying the prospect of the pleasures to come, some spoke ill of the gobernadorcillo, others of the teniente-mayor, others of the young men, and there were not lacking those who blamed everybody for everything.

There was a great deal of comment on the arrival of Maria Clara, accompanied by her Aunt Isabel. All rejoiced over it because they loved her and admired her beauty, while at the same time they wondered at the change that had come over Padre Salvi. “He often becomes inattentive during the holy services, nor does he talk much with us, and he is thinner and more taciturn than usual,” commented his penitents. The cook noticed him getting thinner and thinner by minutes and complained of the little honor that was done to his dishes. But that which caused the most comment among the people was the fact that in the convento were to be seen more than two lights burning during the evening while Padre Salvi was on a visit to a private dwelling—the home of Maria Clara! The pious women crossed themselves but continued their comments.

Ibarra had telegraphed from the capital of the province welcoming Aunt Isabel and her niece, but had failed to explain the reason for his absence. Many thought him a prisoner on account of his treatment of Padre Salvi on the afternoon of All Saints, but the comments reached a climax when, on the evening of the third day, they saw him [158]alight before the home of his fiancée and extend a polite greeting to the priest, who was just entering the same house.
Sisa and her sons were forgotten by all.

If we should now go into the home of Maria Clara, a beautiful nest set among trees of orange and ilang-ilang, we should surprise the two young people at a window overlooking the lake, shadowed by flowers and climbing vines which exhaled a delicate perfume. Their lips murmured words softer than the rustling of the leaves and sweeter than the aromatic odors that floated through the garden. It was the hour when the sirens of the

lake take advantage of the fast falling twilight to show their merry heads above the waves to gaze upon the setting sun and sing it to rest. It is said that their eyes and hair are blue, and that they are crowned with white and red water plants; that at times the foam reveals their shapely forms, whiter than the foam itself, and that when night descends completely they begin their divine sports, playing mysterious airs like those of Æolian harps. But let us turn to our young people and listen to the end of their conversation. Ibarra was speaking to Maria Clara.

"Tomorrow before daybreak your wish shall be fulfilled. I'll arrange everything tonight so that nothing will be lacking."

"Then I'll write to my girl friends to come. But arrange it so that the curate won't be there."

"Why?"

"Because he seems to be watching me. His deep, gloomy eyes trouble me, and when he fixes them on me I'm afraid. When he talks to me, his voice—oh, he speaks of such odd, such strange, such incomprehensible things! He asked me once if I have ever dreamed of letters from my mother. I really believe that he is half-crazy. My friend Sinang and my foster-sister, Andeng, say that he is somewhat touched, because he neither eats nor bathes and lives in darkness. See to it that he does not come!"

[159]"We can't do otherwise than invite him," answered Ibarra thoughtfully. "The customs of the country require it. He is in your house and, besides, he has conducted himself nobly toward me. When the alcalde consulted him about the business of which I've told you, he had only praises for me and didn't try to put the least obstacle in the way. But I see that you're serious about it, so cease worrying, for he won't go in the same boat with us."
Light footsteps were heard. It was the curate, who approached with a forced smile on his lips. "The wind is chilly," he said, "and when one catches cold one generally doesn't get rid of it until the hot weather. Aren't you afraid of catching cold?" His voice trembled and his eyes were turned toward the distant horizon, away from the young people.

"No, we rather find the night pleasant and the breeze delicious," answered Ibarra. "During these months we have our autumn and our spring. Some leaves fall, but the flowers are always in bloom."

Fray Salvi sighed.

“I think the union of these two seasons beautiful, with no cold winter intervening,” continued Ibarra. “In February the buds on the trees will burst open and in March we’ll have the ripe fruit. When the hot month’s come we shall go elsewhere.”

Fray Salvi smiled and began to talk of commonplace things, of the weather, of the town, and of the fiesta. Maria Clara slipped away on some pretext.

“Since we are talking of fiestas, allow me to invite you to the one that we are going to celebrate tomorrow. It is to be a picnic in the woods, which we and our friends are going to hold together.”

“Where will it be held?”

“The young women wish to hold it by the brook in the neighboring wood, near to the old balete, so we shall rise early to avoid the sun.”

The priest thought a moment and then answered: “The [160]invitation is very tempting and I accept it to prove to you that I hold no rancor against you. But I shall have to go late, after I’ve attended to my duties. Happy are you who are free, entirely free.”
A few moments later Ibarra left in order to look after the arrangements for the picnic on the next day. The night was dark and in the street some one approached and saluted him respectfully.

“Who are you?” asked Ibarra.

“Sir, you don’t know my name,” answered the unknown, “but I’ve been waiting for you two days.”

“For what purpose?”

“Because nowhere has any pity been shown me and they say that I’m an outlaw, sir. But I’ve lost my two sons, my wife is insane, and every one says that I deserve what has happened to me.”

Ibarra looked at the man critically as he asked, “What do you want now?”

“To beg for your pity upon my wife and sons.”

“I can’t stop now,” replied Ibarra. “If you wish to come, you can tell me as we go along what has happened to you.”

The man thanked him, and the two quickly disappeared in the shadows along the dimly lighted street.[161]
[Contents]

Chapter XXIII
Fishing

The stars still glittered in the sapphire arch of heaven and the birds were still sleeping among the branches when a merry party, lighted by torches of resin, commonly called *huepes*, made its way through the streets toward the lake. There were five girls, who walked along rapidly with hands clasped or arms encircling one another's waists, followed by some old women and by servants who were carrying gracefully on their heads baskets of food and dishes. Looking upon the laughing and hopeful countenances of the young women and watching the wind blow about their abundant black hair and the wide folds of their garments, we might have taken them for goddesses of the night fleeing from the day, did we not know that they were Maria Clara and her four friends, the merry Sinang, the grave Victoria, the beautiful Iday, and the thoughtful Neneng of modest and timid beauty. They were conversing in a lively manner, laughing and pinching one another, whispering in one another's ears and then breaking out into loud laughter.

"You'll wake up the people who are still asleep," Aunt Isabel scolded. "When we were young, we didn't make so much disturbance."

"Neither would you get up so early nor would the old folks have been such sleepy-heads," retorted little Sinang.

They were silent for a short time, then tried to talk in low tones, but soon forgot themselves and again filled the street with their fresh young voices.

"Behave as if you were displeased and don't talk to him," Sinang was advising Maria Clara. "Scold him so he won't get into bad habits."

[162]"Don't be so exacting," objected Iday.
"Be exacting! Don't be foolish! He must be made to obey while he's only engaged, for after he's your husband he'll do as he pleases," counseled little Sinang.

"What do you know about that, child?" her cousin Victoria corrected her.

"Sst! Keep quiet, for here they come!"

A group of young men, lighting their way with large bamboo torches, now came up, marching gravely along to the sound of a guitar.

“It sounds like a beggar’s guitar,” laughed Sinang. When the two parties met it was the women who maintained a serious and formal attitude, just as if they had never known how to laugh, while on the other hand the men talked and laughed, asking six questions to get half an answer.

“Is the lake calm? Do you think we’ll have good weather?” asked the mothers.

“Don’t be alarmed, ladies, I know how to swim well,” answered a tall, thin, emaciated youth.

“We ought to have heard mass first,” sighed Aunt Isabel, clasping her hands.

“There’s yet time, ma’am. Albino has been a theological student in his day and can say it in the boat,” remarked another youth, pointing to the tall, thin one who had first spoken. The latter, who had a clownish countenance, threw himself into an attitude of contrition, caricaturing Padre Salvi. Ibarra, though he maintained his serious demeanor, also joined in the merriment.

When they arrived at the beach, there involuntarily escaped from the women exclamations of surprise and pleasure at the sight of two large bankas fastened together and picturesquely adorned with garlands of flowers, leaves, and ruined cotton of many colors. Little paper lanterns hung from an improvised canopy amid flowers and fruits. Comfortable seats with rugs and cushions for the women had been provided by Ibarra. Even the paddles and oars [163]were decorated, while in the more profusely decorated banka were a harp, guitars, accordions, and a trumpet made from a carabao horn. In the other banka fires burned on the clay *kalanes* for preparing refreshments of tea, coffee, and *salabat*.

“In this boat here the women, and in the other there the men,” ordered the mothers upon embarking. “Keep quiet! Don’t move about so or we’ll be upset.”

“Cross yourself first,” advised Aunt Isabel, setting the example.

“Are we to be here all alone?” asked Sinang with a grimace. “Ourselves alone?” This question was opportunely answered by a pinch from her mother.

As the boats moved slowly away from the shore, the light of the lanterns was reflected in the calm waters of the lake, while in the eastern sky the first tints of dawn were just beginning to appear. A deep silence reigned over the party after the division established by the mothers, for the young people seemed to have given themselves up to meditation.

“Take care,” said Albino, the ex-theological student, in a loud tone to another youth. “Keep your foot tight on the plug under you.”

“What?”

“It might come out and let the water in. This banka has a lot of holes in it.”

“Oh, we’re going to sink!” cried the frightened women.

“Don’t be alarmed, ladies,” the ex-theological student reassured them to calm their fears. “The banka you are in is safe. It has only five holes in it and they aren’t large.”

“Five holes! *Jesús!* Do you want to drown us?” exclaimed the horrified women.

“Not more than five, ladies, and only about so large,” the ex-theological student assured them, indicating the circle formed with his index finger and thumb. “Press hard on the plugs so that they won’t come out.”

“*María Santísima!* The water’s coming in,” cried an old woman who felt herself already getting wet.

[164]There now arose a small tumult; some screamed, while others thought of jumping into the water.
“Press hard on the plugs there!” repeated Albino, pointing toward the place where the girls were.

“Where, where? *Diós!* We don’t know how! For pity’s sake come here, for we don’t know how!” begged the frightened women.

It was accordingly necessary for five of the young men to get over into the other banka to calm the terrified mothers. But by some strange chance it seemed that there w, as danger by the side of each of the *dalagas*; all the old ladies together did not have a single dangerous hole near them! Still more strange it was that Ibarra had to be seated by the side of Maria Clara, Albino beside Victoria, and so on. Quiet was restored among the solicitous mothers but not in the circle of the young people.

As the water was perfectly still, the fish-corrals not far away, and the hour yet early, it was decided to abandon the oars so that all might partake of some refreshment. Dawn had now come, so the lanterns were extinguished.

"There's nothing to compare with *salabat*, drunk in the morning before going to mass," said Capitana Tika, mother of the merry Sinang. "Drink some *salabat* and eat a rice-cake, Albino, and you'll see that even you will want to pray."

"That's what I'm doing," answered the youth addressed. "I'm thinking of confessing myself."

"No," said Sinang, "drink some coffee to bring merry thoughts."

"I will, at once, because I feel a trifle sad."

"Don't do that," advised Aunt Isabel. "Drink some tea and eat a few crackers. They say that tea calms one's thoughts."

"I'll also take some tea and crackers," answered the complaisant youth, "since fortunately none of these drinks is Catholicism."

"But, can you—" Victoria began.

[165]"Drink some chocolate also? Well, I guess so, since breakfast is not so far off."

The morning was beautiful. The water began to gleam with the light reflected from the sky with such clearness that every object stood revealed without producing a shadow, a bright, fresh clearness permeated with color, such as we get a hint of in some marine paintings. All were now merry as they breathed in the light breeze that began to arise. Even the mothers, so full of cautions and warnings, now laughed and joked among themselves.

“Do you remember,” one old woman was saying to Capitana Tika, “do you remember the time we went to bathe in the river, before we were married? In little boats made from banana-stalks there drifted down with the current fruits of many kinds and fragrant flowers. The little boats had banners on them and each of us could see her name on one of them.”

“And when we were on our way back home?” added another, without letting her go on. “We found the bamboo bridges destroyed and so we had to wade the brooks. The rascals!”

“Yes, I know that I chose rather to let the borders of my skirt get wet than to uncover my feet,” said Capitana Tika, “for I knew that in the thickets on the bank there were eyes watching us.”

Some of the girls who heard these reminiscences winked and smiled, while the others were so occupied with their own conversations that they took no notice.

One man alone, he who performed the duty of pilot, remained silent and removed from all the merriment. He was a youth of athletic build and striking features, with large, sad eyes and compressed lips. His black hair, long and unkempt, fell over a stout neck. A dark striped shirt afforded a suggestion through its folds of the powerful muscles that enabled the vigorous arms to handle as if it were a pen the wide and unwieldy paddle which’ served as a rudder for steering the two bankas.

[166]Maria Clara had more than once caught him looking at her, but on such occasions he had quickly turned his gaze toward the distant mountain or the shore. The young woman was moved with pity at his loneliness and offered him some crackers. The pilot gave her a surprised stare, which, however, lasted for only a second. He took a cracker and thanked her briefly in a scarcely audible voice. After this no one paid any more attention to him. The sallies and merry laughter of the young folks caused not the slightest movement in the muscles of his face. Even the merry Sinang did not make him smile when she received pinchings that caused her to wrinkle up her eyebrows for an instant, only to return to her former merry mood.

The lunch over, they proceeded on their way toward the fish-corrals, of which there were two situated near each other, both belonging to Capitan Tiago. From afar were to be seen some herons perched in contemplative

attitude on the tops of the bamboo posts, while a number of white birds, which the Tagalogs call *kalaway*, flew about in different directions, skimming the water with their wings and filling the air with shrill cries. At the approach of the bankas the herons took to flight, and Maria Clara followed them with her gaze as they flew in the direction of the neighboring mountain.

“Do those birds build their nests on the mountain?” she asked the pilot, not so much from a desire to know as for the purpose of making him talk.

“Probably they do, señora,” he answered, “but no one up to this time has ever seen their nests.”

“Don’t they have nests?”

“I suppose they must have them, otherwise they would be very unfortunate.”

Maria Clara did not notice the tone of sadness with which he uttered these words. “Then—”

“It is said, señora,” answered the strange youth, “that the nests of those birds are invisible and that they have the power of rendering invisible any one who possesses [167]one of them. Just as the soul can only be seen in the pure mirror of the eyes, so also in the mirror of the water alone can their nests be looked upon.”

Maria Clara became sad and thoughtful. Meanwhile, they had reached the first fish-corral and an aged boatman tied the craft to a post.

“Wait!” called Aunt Isabel to the son of the fisherman, who was getting ready to climb upon the platform of the corral with his*panalok*, or fish-net fastened on the end of a stout bamboo pole. “We must get the *sinigang* ready so that the fish may pass at once from the water into the soup.”

“Kind Aunt Isabel!” exclaimed the ex-theological student. “She doesn’t want the fish to miss the water for an instant!”

Andeng, Maria Clara’s foster-sister, in spite of her carefree and happy face, enjoyed the reputation of being an excellent cook, so she set about preparing a soup of rice and vegetables, helped and hindered by some of the

young men, eager perhaps to win her favor. The other young women all busied themselves in cutting up and washing the vegetables.

In order to divert the impatience of those who were waiting to see the fishes taken alive and wriggling from their prison, the beautiful Iday got out the harp, for Iday not only played well on that instrument, but, besides, she had very pretty fingers. The young people applauded and Maria Clara kissed her, for the harp is the most popular instrument in that province, and was especially suited to this occasion.

“Sing the hymn about marriage,” begged the old women. The men protested and Victoria, who had a fine voice, complained of hoarseness. The “Hymn of Marriage” is a beautiful Tagalog chant in which are set forth the cares and sorrows of the married state, yet not passing over its joys.

They then asked Maria Clara to sing, but she protested [168]that all her songs were sad ones. This protest, however, was overruled so she held back no longer. Taking the harp, she played a short prelude and then sang in a harmonious and vibrating voice full of feeling:

Sweet are the hours in one’s native land,
Where all is dear the sunbeams bless;
Life-giving breezes sweep the strand,
And death is soften’d by love’s caress.
Warm kisses play on mother’s lips,
On her fond, tender breast awaking;
When round her neck the soft arm slips,
And bright eyes smile, all love partaking.
Sweet is death for one’s native land,
Where all is dear the sunbeams bless;
Dead is the breeze that sweeps the strand,
Without a mother, home, or love’s caress.

The song ceased, the voice died away, the harp became silent, and they still listened; no one applauded. The young women felt their eyes fill with tears, and Ibarra seemed to be unpleasantly affected. The youthful pilot stared motionless into the distance.

Suddenly a thundering roar was heard, such that the women screamed and covered their ears; it was the ex-theological student blowing with all the strength of his lungs on the *tambuli*, or carabao horn. Laughter and

cheerfulness returned while tear-dimmed eyes brightened. “Are you trying to deafen us, you heretic?” cried Aunt Isabel.

“Madam,” replied the offender gravely, “I once heard of a poor trumpeter on the banks of the Rhine who, by playing on his trumpet, won in marriage a rich and noble maiden.”

“That’s right, the trumpeter of Sackingen!” exclaimed Ibarra, unable to resist taking part in the renewed merriment.

“Do you hear that?” went on Albino. “Now I want to see if I can’t have the same luck.” So saying, he began [169]to blow with even more force into the resounding horn, holding it close to the ears of the girls who looked saddest. As might be expected, a small tumult arose and the mothers finally reduced him to silence by beating him with their slippers[1] and pinching him.
“My, oh my!” he complained as he felt of his smarting arms, “what a distance there is between the Philippines and the banks of the Rhine! *O tempora! O mores!* Some are given honors and others sanbenitos!”

All laughed at this, even the grave Victoria, while Sinang, she of the smiling eyes, whispered to Maria Clara, “Happy girl! I, too, would sing if I could!”

Andeng at length announced that the soup was ready to receive its guests, so the young fisherman climbed up into the pen placed at the narrower end of the corral, over which might be written for the fishes, were they able to read and understand Italian, “*Lasciate ogni speranza voi ch’ entrante*,”[2] for no fish that gets in there is ever released except by death. This division of the corral encloses a circular space so arranged that a man can stand on a platform in the upper part and draw the fish out with a small net.

“I shouldn’t get tired fishing there with a pole and line,” commented Sinang, trembling with pleasant anticipation.

All were now watching and some even began to believe that they saw the fishes wriggling about in the net and showing their glittering scales. But when the youth lowered his net not a fish leaped up.

“It must be full,” whispered Albino, “for it has been over five days now since it was visited.”

The fisherman drew in his net, but not even a single little fish adorned it. The water as it fell back in glittering [170]drops reflecting the sunlight seemed to mock his efforts with a silvery smile. An exclamation of surprise, displeasure, and disappointment escaped from the lips of all. Again the youth repeated the operation, but with no better result.

"You don't understand your business," said Albino, climbing up into the pen of the corral and taking the net from the youth's hands. "Now you'll see! Andeng, get the pot ready!"

But apparently Albino did not understand the business either, for the net again came up empty. All broke out into laughter at him.

"Don't make so much noise that the fish can hear and so not let themselves be caught. This net must be torn." But on examination all the meshes of the net appeared to be intact.

"Give it to me," said Leon, Iday's sweetheart. He assured himself that the fence was in good condition, examined the net and being satisfied with it, asked, "Are you sure that it hasn't been visited for five days?"

"Very sure! The last time was on the eve of All Saints."

"Well then, either the lake is enchanted or I'll draw up something."

Leon then dropped the pole into the water and instantly astonishment was pictured on his countenance. Silently he looked off toward the mountain and moved the pole about in the water, then without raising it murmured in a low voice:

"A cayman!"

"A cayman!" repeated everyone, as the word ran from mouth to mouth in the midst of fright and general surprise.

"What did you say?" they asked him.

"I say that we're caught a cayman," Leon assured them, and as he dropped the heavy end of the pole into the water, he continued: "Don't you hear that sound? That's not sand, but a tough hide, the back of a cayman. Don't you [171]see how the posts shake? He's pushing against them even though

he is all rolled up. Wait, he's a big one, his body is almost a foot or more across."
"What shall we do?" was the question.

"Catch him!" prompted some one.

"Heavens*!* And who'll catch him?"

No one offered to go down into the trap, for the water was deep.

"We ought to tie him to our banka and drag him along in triumph," suggested Sinang. "The idea of his eating the fish that we were going to eat!"

"I have never yet seen a live cayman," murmured Maria Clara.

The pilot arose, picked up a long rope, and climbed nimbly up on the platform, where Leon made room for him. With the exception of Maria Clara, no one had taken any notice of him, but now all admired his shapely figure. To the great surprise of all and in spite of their cries, he leaped down into the enclosure.

"Take this knife!" called Crisostomo to him, holding out a wide Toledo blade, but already the water was splashing up in a thousand jets and the depths closed mysteriously.

"*Jesús, María, y José*!" exclaimed the old women. "We're going to have an accident!"

"Don't be uneasy, ladies," said the old boatman, "for if there is any one in the province who can do it, he's the man."

"What's his name?" they asked.

"We call him 'The Pilot' and he's the best I've ever seen, only he doesn't like the business."

The water became disturbed, then broke into ripples, the fence shook; a struggle seemed to be going on in the depths. All were silent and hardly breathed. Ibarra grasped the handle of the sharp knife convulsively.

Now the struggle seemed to be at an end and the head of the youth appeared, to be greeted with joyful cries. The eyes of the old women filled

with tears. The pilot [172]climbed up with one end of the rope in his hand and once on the platform began to pull on it. The monster soon appeared above the water with the rope tied in a double band around its neck and underneath its front legs. It was a large one, as Leon had said, speckled, and on its back grew the green moss which is to the caymans what gray hairs are to men. Roaring like a bull and beating its tail against or catching hold of the sides of the corral, it opened its huge jaws and showed its long, sharp teeth. The pilot was hoisting it alone, for no one had thought to assist him.
Once out of the water and resting on the platform, he placed his foot upon it and with his strong hands forced its huge jaws together and tried to tie its snout with stout knots. With a last effort the reptile arched its body, struck the floor with its powerful tail, and jerking free, hurled itself with one leap into the water outside the corral, dragging its captor along with it. A cry of horror broke from the lips of all. But like a flash of lightning another body shot into the water so quickly that there was hardly time to realize that it was Ibarra. Maria Clara did not swoon only for the reason that the Filipino women do not yet know how to do so.

The anxious watchers saw the water become colored and dyed with blood. The young fisherman jumped down with his bolo in his hand and was followed by his father, but they had scarcely disappeared when Crisostomo and the pilot reappeared clinging to the dead body of the reptile, which had the whole length of its white belly slit open and the knife still sticking in its throat.

To describe the joy were impossible, as a dozen arms reached out to drag the young men from the water. The old women were beside themselves between laughter and prayers. Andeng forgot that her *sinigang* had boiled over three times, spilling the soup and putting out the fire. The only one who could say nothing was Maria Clara.

Ibarra was uninjured, while the pilot had only a slight [173]scratch on his arm. “I owe my life to you,” said the latter to Ibarra, who was wrapping himself up in blankets and cloths. The pilot’s voice seemed to have a note of sadness in it.
“You are too daring,” answered Ibarra. “Don’t tempt fate again.”

“If you had not come up again—” murmured the still pale and trembling Maria Clara.

“If I had not come up and you had followed me,” replied Ibarra, completing the thought in his own way, “in the bottom of the lake, *I should still have been with my family!*” He had not forgotten that there lay the bones of his father.

The old women did not want to visit the other corral but wished to return, saying that the day had begun inauspiciously and that many more accidents might occur. “All because we didn’t hear mass,” sighed one.

“But what accident has befallen us, ladies?” asked Ibarra. “The cayman seems to have been the only unlucky one.”

“All of which proves,” concluded the ex-student of theology, “that in all its sinful life this unfortunate reptile has never attended mass—at least, I’ve never seen him among the many other caymans that frequent the church.”

So the boats were turned in the direction of the other corral and Andeng had to get her *sinigang* ready again. The day was now well advanced, with a fresh breeze blowing. The waves curled up behind the body of the cayman, raising “mountains of foam whereon the smooth, rich sunlight glitters,” as the poet says. The music again resounded; Iday played on the harp, while the men handled the accordions and guitars with greater or less skill. The prize-winner was Albino, who actually scratched the instruments, getting out of tune and losing the time every moment or else forgetting it and changing to another tune entirely different.

[174]The second corral was visited with some misgivings, as many expected to find there the mate of the dead cayman, but nature is ever a jester, and the nets came up full at each haul. Aunt Isabel superintended the sorting of the fish and ordered that some be left in the trap for decoys. “It’s not lucky to empty the corral completely,” she concluded.

Then they made their way toward the shore near the forest of old trees that belonged to Ibarra. There in the shade by the clear waters of the brook, among the flowers, they ate their breakfast under improvised canopies. The space was filled with music while the smoke from the fires curled up in slender wreaths. The water bubbled cheerfully in the hot dishes as though uttering sounds of consolation, or perchance of sarcasm and irony, to the dead fishes. The body of the cayman writhed about, sometimes showing its torn white belly and again its speckled greenish back, while man, Nature’s

favorite, went on his way undisturbed by what the Brahmins and vegetarians would call so many cases of fratricide.[175]

1The *chinela*, the Philippine slipper, is a soft leather sole, heelless, with only a vamp, usually of plush or velvet, to hold it on.—TR.

2"All hope abandon, ye who enter here." The words inscribed over the gate of Hell: Dante's *Inferno*, III, 9.—TR.

[Contents]

Chapter XXIV
In the Wood

Early, very early indeed, somewhat differently from his usual custom, Padre Salvi had celebrated mass and cleansed a dozen sinful souls in a few moments. Then it seemed that the reading of some letters which he had received firmly sealed and waxed caused the worthy curate to lose his appetite, since he allowed his chocolate to become completely cold.

“The padre is getting sick,” commented the cook while preparing another cup. “For days he hasn’t eaten; of the six dishes that I set before him on the table he doesn’t touch even two.”

“It’s because he sleeps badly,” replied the other servant. “He has nightmares since he changed his bedroom. His eyes are becoming more sunken all the time and he’s getting thinner and yellower day by day.”

Truly, Padre Salvi was a pitiable sight. He did not care to touch the second cup of chocolate nor to taste the sweet cakes of Cebu; instead, he paced thoughtfully about the spacious sala, crumpling in his bony hands the letters, which he read from time to time. Finally, he called for his carriage, got ready, and directed that he be taken to the wood where stood the fateful tree near which the picnic was being held.

Arriving at the edge of the wood, the padre dismissed his carriage and made his way alone into its depths. A gloomy pathway opened a difficult passage through the thickets and led to the brook formed by certain warm springs, like many that flow from the slopes of Mr. Makiling. Adorning its banks grow wild flowers, many of which [176]have as yet no Latin names, but which are doubtless well-known to the gilded insects and butterflies of all shapes and colors, blue and gold, white and black, many-hued, glittering with iridescent spots, with rubies and emeralds on their wings, and to the countless beetles with their metallic lusters of powdered gold. The hum of the insects, the cries of the cicada, which cease not night or day, the songs of the birds, and the dry crashing of the rotten branch that falls and strikes all around against the trees, are the only sounds to break the stillness of that mysterious place.

For some time the padre wandered aimlessly among the thick underbrush, avoiding the thorns that caught at his *guingón* habit as though to detain him, and the roots of the trees that protruded from the soil to form stumbling-blocks at every step for this wanderer unaccustomed to such places. But suddenly his feet were arrested by the sound of clear voices raised in merry laughter, seeming to come from the brook and apparently drawing nearer.

"I'm going to see if I can find one of those nests," said a beautiful, sweet voice, which the curate recognized. "I'd like to see *him*without having him see me, so I could follow him everywhere."

Padre Salvi hid behind the trunk of a large tree and set himself to eavesdrop.

"Does that mean that you want to do with him what the curate does with you?" asked a laughing voice. "He watches you everywhere. Be careful, for jealousy makes people thin and puts rings around their eyes."

"No, no, not jealousy, it's pure curiosity," replied the silvery voice, while the laughing one repeated, "Yes, jealousy, jealousy!" and she burst out into merry laughter.

"If I were jealous, instead of making myself invisible, I'd make him so, in order that no one might see him."

"But neither would you see *him* and that wouldn't be nice. The best thing for us to do if we find the nest would be to present it to the curate so that he could watch [177]over us without the necessity of our seeing him, don't you think so?"
"I don't believe in those herons' nests," interrupted another voice, "but if at any time I should be jealous, I'd know how to watch and still keep myself hidden."

"How, how? Perhaps like a *Sor Escucha?*"[1]

This reminiscence of school-days provoked another merry burst of laughter.

"And you know how she's fooled, the *Sor Escucha!*"

From his hiding-place Padre Salvi saw Maria Clara, Victoria, and Sinang wading along the border of the brook. They were moving forward with their

eyes fixed on the crystal waters, seeking the enchanted nest of the heron, wet to their knees so that the wide folds of their bathing skirts revealed the graceful curves of their bodies. Their hair was flung loose, their arms bare, and they wore camisas with wide stripes of bright hues. While looking for something that they could not find they were picking flowers and plants which grew along the bank.

The religious Acteon stood pale and motionless gazing at that chaste Diana, but his eyes glittered in their dark circles, untired of staring at those white and shapely arms and at that elegant neck and bust, while the small rosy feet that played in the water awoke in his starved being strange sensations and in his burning brain dreams of new ideas.

The three charming figures disappeared behind a bamboo thicket around a bend in the brook, and their cruel allusions ceased to be heard. Intoxicated, staggering, covered with perspiration, Padre Salvi left his hiding-place and looked all about him with rolling eyes. He stood still as if in doubt, then took a few steps as though he would try to follow the girls, but turned again and made his way along the banks of the stream to seek the rest of the party.

At a little distance he saw in the middle of the brook a kind of bathing-place, well enclosed, decorated with [178]palm leaves, flowers, and streamers, with a leafy clump of bamboo for a covering, from within which came the sound of happy feminine voices. Farther on he saw a bamboo bridge and beyond it the men bathing. Near these a crowd of servants was busily engaged around improvised *kalanes* in plucking chickens, washing rice, and roasting a pig. On the opposite bank in a cleared space were gathered men and women under a canvas covering which was fastened partly to the hoary trees and partly to newly-driven stakes. There were gathered the alferez, the coadjutor, the gobernadorcillo, the teniente-mayor, the schoolmaster, and many other personages of the town, even including Sinang's father, Capitan Basilio, who had been the adversary of the deceased Don Rafael in an old lawsuit. Ibarra had said to him, "We are disputing over a point of law, but that does not mean that we are enemies," so the celebrated orator of the conservatives had enthusiastically accepted the invitation, sending along three turkeys and putting his servants at the young man's disposal.

The curate was received with respect and deference by all, even the alferez. “Why, where has your Reverence been?” asked the latter, as he noticed the curate’s scratched face and his habit covered with leaves and dry twigs. “Has your Reverence had a fall?”

“No, I lost my way,” replied Padre Salvi, lowering his gaze to examine his gown.

Bottles of lemonade were brought out and green coconuts were split open so that the bathers as they came from the water might refresh themselves with the milk and the soft meat, whiter than the milk itself. The girls all received in addition rosaries of sampaguitas, intertwined with roses and ilang-ilang blossoms, to perfume their flowing tresses. Some of the company sat on the ground or reclined in hammocks swung from the branches of the trees, while others amused themselves around a wide flat rock on which were to be seen playing-cards, a chess-board, booklets, cowry shells, and pebbles.

[179]They showed the cayman to the curate, but he seemed inattentive until they told him that the gaping wound had been inflicted by Ibarra. The celebrated and unknown pilot was no longer to be seen, as he had disappeared before the arrival of the alferez.
At length Maria Clara came from the bath with her companions, looking fresh as a rose on its first morning when the dew sparkling on its fair petals glistens like diamonds. Her first smile was for Crisostomo and the first cloud on her brow for Padre Salvi, who noted it and sighed.

The lunch hour was now come, and the curate, the coadjutor, the gobernadorcillo, the teniente-mayor, and the other dignitaries took their seats at the table over which Ibarra presided. The mothers would not permit any of the men to eat at the table where the young women sat.

“This time, Albino, you can’t invent holes as in the bankas,” said Leon to the quondam student of theology. “What*!* What’s that?” asked the old women.

“The bankas, ladies, were as whole as this plate is,” explained Leon.

“*Jesús!* The rascal!” exclaimed the smiling Aunt Isabel.

“Have you yet learned anything of the criminal who assaulted Padre Damaso?” inquired Fray Salvi of the alferez.

“Of what criminal, Padre?” asked the military man, staring at the friar over the glass of wine that he was emptying,

“What criminal! Why, the one who struck Padre Damaso in the road yesterday afternoon!”

“Struck Padre Damaso?” asked several voices.

The coadjutor seemed to smile, while Padre Salvi went on: “Yes, and Padre Damaso is now confined to his bed. It’s thought that he may be the very same Elias who threw you into the mudhole, señor alferez.”

Either from shame or wine the alferez’s face became very red.

[180]“Of course, I thought,” continued Padre Salvi in a joking manner, “that you, the alferez of the Civil Guard, would be informed about the affair.”
The soldier bit his lip and was murmuring some foolish excuse, when the meal was suddenly interrupted by the appearance of a pale, thin, poorly-clad woman. No one had noticed her approach, for she had come so noiselessly that at night she might have been taken for a ghost.

“Give this poor woman something to eat,” cried the old women. “*Oy*, come here!”

Still the strange woman kept on her way to the table where the curate was seated. As he turned his face and recognized her, his knife dropped from his hand.

“Give this woman something to eat,” ordered Ibarra.

“The night is dark and the boys disappear,” murmured the wandering woman, but at sight of the alferez, who spoke to her, she became frightened and ran away among the trees.

“Who is she?” he asked.

“An unfortunate woman who has become insane from fear and sorrow,” answered Don Filipo. “For four days now she has been so.”

“Is her name Sisa?” asked Ibarra with interest.

“Your soldiers arrested her,” continued the teniente-mayor, rather bitterly, to the alferez. “They marched her through the town on account of something about her sons which isn’t very clearly known.”

“What!” exclaimed the alferez, turning to the curate, “she isn’t the mother of your two sacristans?”

The curate nodded in affirmation.

“They disappeared and nobody made any inquiries about them,” added Don Filipo with a severe look at the gobernadorcillo, who dropped his eyes.

“Look for that woman,” Crisostomo ordered the servants. “I promised to try to learn where her sons are.”

“They disappeared, did you say?” asked the alferez. “Your sacristans disappeared, Padre?”

[181]The friar emptied the glass of wine before him and again nodded.
“*Caramba*, Padre!” exclaimed the alferez with a sarcastic laugh, pleased at the thought of a little revenge. “A few pesos of your Reverence’s disappear and my sergeant is routed out early to hunt for them—two sacristans disappear and your Reverence says nothing—and you, señor capitan—It’s also true that you—”

Here he broke off with another laugh as he buried his spoon in the red meat of a wild papaya.

The curate, confused, and not over-intent upon what he was saying, replied, “That’s because I have to answer for the money—”

“A good answer, reverend shepherd of souls!” interrupted the alferez with his mouth full of food. “A splendid answer, holy man!”

Ibarra wished to intervene, but Padre Salvi controlled himself by an effort and said with a forced smile, “Then you don’t know, sir, what is said about the disappearance of those boys? No? Then ask your soldiers!”

“What!” exclaimed the alferez, all his mirth gone.

“It’s said that on the night they disappeared several shots were heard.”

“Several shots?” echoed the alferez, looking around at the other guests, who nodded their heads in corroboration of the padre’s statement.

Padre Salvi then replied slowly and with cutting sarcasm: “Come now, I see that you don’t catch the criminals nor do you know what is going on in your own house, yet you try to set yourself up as a preacher to point out their duties to others. You ought to keep in mind that proverb about the fool in his own house—”[2]

“Gentlemen!” interrupted Ibarra, seeing that the alferez had grown pale. “In this connection I should like to have your opinion about a project of mine. I’m thinking [182]of putting this crazy woman under the care of a skilful physician and, in the meantime, with your aid and advice, I’ll search for her sons.”
The return of the servants without the madwoman, whom they had been unable to find, brought peace by turning the conversation to other matters.

The meal ended, and while the tea and coffee were being served, both old and young scattered about in different groups. Some took the chessmen, others the cards, while the girls, curious about the future, chose to put questions to a *Wheel of Fortune*.

“Come, Señor Ibarra,” called Capitan Basilio in merry mood, “we have a lawsuit fifteen years old, and there isn’t a judge in the Audiencia who can settle it. Let’s see if we can’t end it on the chess-board.”

“With the greatest pleasure,” replied the youth. “Just wait a moment, the alferez is leaving.”

Upon hearing about this match all the old men who understood chess gathered around the board, for it promised to be an interesting one, and attracted even spectators who were not familiar with the game. The old women, however, surrounded the curate in order to converse with him about spiritual matters, but Fray Salvi apparently did not consider the place and time appropriate, for he gave vague answers and his sad, rather bored, looks wandered in all directions except toward his questioners.

The chess-match began with great solemnity. “If this game ends in a draw, it’s understood that the lawsuit is to be dropped,” said Ibarra.

In the midst of the game Ibarra received a telegram which caused his eyes to shine and his face to become pale. He put it into his pocketbook, at the same time glancing toward the group of young people, who were still with laughter and shouts putting questions to Destiny.

“Check to the king!” called the youth.

Capitan Basilio had no other recourse than to hide the piece behind the queen.

[183]“Check to the queen!” called the youth as he threatened that piece with a rook which was defended by a pawn.
Being unable to protect the queen or to withdraw the piece on account of the king behind it, Capitan Basilio asked for time to reflect.

“Willingly,” agreed Ibarra, “especially as I have something to say this very minute to those young people in that group over there.” He arose with the agreement that his opponent should have a quarter of an hour.

Iday had the round card on which were written the forty-eight questions, while Albino held the book of answers.

“A lie! It’s not so!” cried Sinang, half in tears.

“What’s the matter?” asked Maria Clara.

“Just imagine, I asked, ‘When shall I have some sense?’ I threw the dice and that worn-out priest read from the book, ‘When the frogs raise hair.’ What do you think of that?” As she said this, Sinang made a grimace at the laughing ex-theological student.

“Who told you to ask that question?” her cousin Victoria asked her. “To ask it is enough to deserve such an answer.”

“You ask a question,” they said to Ibarra, offering him the wheel. “We’re decided that whoever gets the best answer shall receive a present from the rest. Each of us has already had a question.”

“Who got the best answer?”

“Maria Clara, Maria Clara!” replied Sinang. “We made her ask, willy-nilly, ‘Is your sweetheart faithful and constant?’ And the book answered—”

But here the blushing Maria Clara put her hands over Sinang's mouth so that she could not finish.

"Well, give me the wheel," said Crisostomo, smiling. "My question is, 'Shall I succeed in my present enterprise?'"

"What an ugly question!" exclaimed Sinang.

Ibarra threw the dice and in accordance with the resulting number the page and line were sought.

[184]"Dreams are dreams," read Albino.
Ibarra drew out the telegram and opened it with trembling hands. "This time your book is wrong!" he exclaimed joyfully. "Read this: 'School project approved. Suit decided in your favor.'"

"What does it mean?" all asked.

"Didn't you say that a present is to be given to the one receiving the best answer?" he asked in a voice shaking with emotion as he tore the telegram carefully into two pieces.

"Yes, yes!"

"Well then, this is my present," he said as he gave one piece to Maria Clara. "A school for boys and girls is to be built in the town and this school is my present."

"And the other part, what does it mean?"

"It's to be given to the one who has received the worst answer."

"To me, then, to me!" cried Sinang.

Ibarra gave her the other piece of the telegram and hastily withdrew.

"What does it mean?" she asked, but the happy youth was already at a distance, returning to the game of chess.

Fray Salvi in abstracted mood approached the circle of young people. Maria Clara wiped away her tears of joy, the laughter ceased, and the talk died away. The curate stared at the young people without offering to say anything, while they silently waited for him to speak.

“What’s this?” he at length asked, picking up the book and turning its leaves.

“*The Wheel of Fortune*, a book of games,” replied Leon.

“Don’t you know that it’s a sin to believe in these things?” he scolded, tearing the leaves out angrily.

Cries of surprise and anger escaped from the lips of all.

“It’s a greater sin to dispose of what isn’t yours, against the wish of the owner,” contradicted Albino, rising. “Padre, that’s what is called stealing and it is forbidden by God and men!”

[185]Maria Clara clasped her hands and gazed with tearful eyes at the remnants of the book which a few moments before had been the source of so much happiness for her.
Contrary to the general expectation, Fray Salvi did not reply to Albino, but stood staring at the torn leaves as they were whirled about, some falling in the wood, some in the water, then he staggered away with his hands over his head. He stopped for a few moments to speak with Ibarra, who accompanied him to one of the carriages, which were at the disposal of the guests.

“He’s doing well to leave, that kill-joy,” murmured Sinang. “He has a face that seems to say, ‘Don’t laugh, for I know about your sins!’”

After making the present to his fiancée, Ibarra was so happy that he began to play without reflection or a careful examination of the positions of the pieces. The result was that although Capitan Basilio was hard pressed the game became a stalemate, owing to many careless moves on the young man’s part.

“It’s settled, we’re at peace!” exclaimed Capitan Basilio heartily.

“Yes, we’re at peace,” repeated the youth, “whatever the decision of the court may be.” And the two shook hands cordially.

While all present were rejoicing over this happy termination of a quarrel of which both parties were tired, the sudden arrival of a sergeant and four

soldiers of the Civil Guard, all armed and with bayonets fixed, disturbed the mirth and caused fright among the women.

“Keep still, everybody!” shouted the sergeant. “Shoot any one who moves!”

In spite of this blustering command, Ibarra arose and approached the sergeant. “What do you want?” he asked.

“That you deliver to us at once a criminal named Elias, who was your pilot this morning,” was the threatening reply.

[186]“A criminal—the pilot? You must be mistaken,” answered Ibarra.
“No, sir, this Elias has just been accused of putting his hand on a priest—”

“Oh, was that the pilot?”

“The very same, according to reports. You admit persons of bad character into your fiestas, Señor Ibarra.”

Ibarra looked him over from head to foot and replied with great disdain, “I don’t have to give you an account of my actions! At our fiestas all are welcome. Had you yourself come, you would have found a place at our table, just as did your alferez, who was with us a couple of hours ago.” With this he turned his back.

The sergeant gnawed at the ends of his mustache but, considering himself the weaker party, ordered the soldiers to institute a search, especially among the trees, for the pilot, a description of whom he carried on a piece of paper.

Don Filipo said to him, “Notice that this description fits nine tenths of the natives. Don’t make any false move!”

After a time the soldiers returned with the report that they had been unable to see either banka or man that could be called suspicious-looking, so the sergeant muttered a few words and went away as he had come—in the manner of the Civil Guard!

The merriment was little by little restored, amid questions and comments.

“So that’s the Elias who threw the alferez into the mudhole,” said Leon thoughtfully.

“How did that happen? How was it?” asked some of the more curious.

“They say that on a very rainy day in September the alferez met a man who was carrying a bundle of firewood. The road was very muddy and there was only a narrow path at the side, wide enough for but one person. They say that the alferez, instead of reining in his pony, put spurs to it, at the same time calling to the man to get out [187]of the way. It seemed that this man, on account of the heavy load he was carrying on his shoulder, had little relish for going back nor did he want to be swallowed up in the mud, so he continued on his way forward. The alferez in irritation tried to knock him down, but he snatched a piece of wood from his bundle and struck the pony on the head with such great force that it fell, throwing its rider into the mud. They also say that the man went on his way tranquilly without taking any notice of the five bullets that were fired after him by the alferez, who was blind with mud and rage. As the man was entirely unknown to him it was supposed that he might be the famous Elias who came to the province several months ago, having come from no one knows where. He has given the Civil Guard cause to know him in several towns for similar actions.”
“Then he’s a tulisan?” asked Victoria shuddering.

“I don’t think so, for they say that he fought against some tulisanes one day when they were robbing a house.”

“He hasn’t the look of a criminal,” commented Sinang.

“No, but he looks very sad. I didn’t see him smile the whole morning,” added Maria Clara thoughtfully.

So the afternoon passed away and the hour for returning to the town came. Under the last rays of the setting sun they left the woods, passing in silence by the mysterious tomb of Ibarra’s ancestors. Afterwards, the merry talk was resumed in a lively manner, full of warmth, beneath those branches so little accustomed to hear so many voices. The trees seemed sad, while the vines swung back and forth as if to say, “Farewell, youth! Farewell, dream of a day!”

Now in the light of the great red torches of bamboo and with the sound of the guitars let us leave them on the road to the town. The groups grow smaller, the lights are extinguished, the songs die away, and the guitar becomes silent as they approach the abodes of men. Put on the mask now that you are once more amongst your kind![188]

[1]"Listening Sister," the nun who acts as spy and monitor over the girls studying in a convent.—TR.

[2]"Más sabe el loco en su casa que el cuerdo en la ajena." The fool knows more in his own house than a wise man does in another's.—TR.

[Contents]

Chapter XXV
In the House of the Sage

On the morning of the following day, Ibarra, after visiting his lands, made his way to the home of old Tasio. Complete stillness reigned in the garden, for even the swallows circling about the eaves scarcely made any noise. Moss grew on the old wall, over which a kind of ivy clambered to form borders around the windows. The little house seemed to be the abode of silence.

Ibarra hitched his horse carefully to a post and walking almost on tiptoe crossed the clean and well-kept garden to the stairway, which he ascended, and as the door was open, he entered. The first sight that met his gaze was the old man bent over a book in which he seemed to be writing. On the walls were collections of insects and plants arranged among maps and stands filled with books and manuscripts. The old man was so absorbed in his work that he did not notice the presence of the youth until the latter, not wishing to disturb him, tried to retire.

“Ah, you here?” he asked, gazing at Ibarra with a strange expression. “Excuse me,” answered the youth, “I see that you’re very busy—”

“True, I was writing a little, but it’s not urgent, and I want to rest. Can I do anything for you?”

“A great deal,” answered Ibarra, drawing nearer, “but—”

A glance at the book on the table caused him to exclaim in surprise, “What, are you given to deciphering hieroglyphics?”

“No,” replied the old man, as he offered his visitor a chair. “I don’t understand Egyptian or Coptic either, [189]but I know something about the system of writing, so I write in hieroglyphics.”
“You write in hieroglyphics! Why?” exclaimed the youth, doubting what he saw and heard.

“So that I cannot be read now.”

Ibarra gazed at him fixedly, wondering to himself if the old man were not indeed crazy. He examined the book rapidly to learn if he was telling the

truth and saw neatly drawn figures of animals, circles, semicircles, flowers, feet, hands, arms, and such things.

“But why do you write if you don’t want to be read?”

“Because I’m not writing for this generation, but for other ages. If this generation could read, it would burn my books, the labor of my whole life. But the generation that deciphers these characters will be an intelligent generation, it will understand and say, ‘Not all were asleep in the night of our ancestors!’ The mystery of these curious characters will save my work from the ignorance of men, just as the mystery of strange rites has saved many truths from the destructive priestly classes.”

“In what language do you write?” asked Ibarra after a pause.

“In our own, Tagalog.”

“Are the hieroglyphical signs suitable?”

“If it were not for the difficulty of drawing them, which takes time and patience, I would almost say that they are more suitable than the Latin alphabet. The ancient Egyptian had our vowels; our *o*, which is only final and is not like that of the Spanish, which is a vowel between *o* and *u*. Like us, the Egyptians lacked the true sound of *e*, and in their language are found our *ha* and *kha*, which we do not have in the Latin alphabet such as is used in Spanish. For example, in this word *mukha*,” he went on, pointing to the book, “I transcribe the syllable *ha* more correctly with the figure of a fish than with the Latin *h*, which in Europe is pronounced in different ways. For a weaker aspirate, as for example in this word *haín*, where [190]the *h* has less force, I avail myself of this lion’s head or of these three lotus flowers, according to the quantity of the vowel. Besides, I have the nasal sound which does not exist in the Latin-Spanish alphabet. I repeat that if it were not for the difficulty of drawing them exactly, these hieroglyphics could almost be adopted, but this same difficulty obliges me to be concise and not say more than what is exact and necessary. Moreover, this work keeps me company when my guests from China and Japan go away.”

“Your guests from China and Japan?”

“Don’t you hear them? My guests are the swallows. This year one of them is missing—some bad boy in China or Japan must have caught it.”

“How do you know that they come from those countries?”

“Easily enough! Several years ago, before they left I tied to the foot of each one a slip of paper with the name ‘Philippines’ in English on it, supposing that they must not travel very far and because English is understood nearly everywhere. For years my slips brought no reply, so that at last I had it written in Chinese and here in the following November they have returned with other notes which I have had deciphered. One is written in Chinese and is a greeting from the banks of the Hoang-Ho and the other, as the Chinaman whom I consulted supposes, must be in Japanese. But I’m taking your time with these things and haven’t asked you what I can do for you.”

“I’ve come to speak to you about a matter of importance,” said the youth. “Yesterday afternoon—”

“Have they caught that poor fellow?”

“You mean Elias? How did you know about him?”

“I saw the Muse of the Civil Guard!”

“The Muse of the Civil Guard? Who is she?”

“The alferez’s woman, whom you didn’t invite to your picnic. Yesterday morning the incident of the cayman became known through the town. The Muse of the Civil [191]Guard is as astute as she is malignant and she guessed that the pilot must be the bold person who threw her husband into the mudhole and who assaulted Padre Damaso. As she reads all the reports that her husband is to receive, scarcely had he got back home, drunk and not knowing what he was doing, when to revenge herself on you she sent the sergeant with the soldiers to disturb the merriment of your picnic. Be careful! Eve was a good woman, sprung from the hands of God—they say that Doña Consolacion is evil and it’s not known whose hands she came from! In order to be good, a woman needs to have been, at least sometime, either a maid or a mother.”

Ibarra smiled slightly and replied by taking some documents from his pocketbook. “My dead father used to consult you in some things and I recall that he had only to congratulate himself on following your advice. I have on hand a little enterprise, the success of which I must assure.” Here he explained briefly his plan for the school, which he had offered to his

fiancée, spreading out in view of the astonished Sage some plans which had been prepared in Manila.

“I would like to have you advise me as to what persons in the town I must first win over in order to assure the success of the undertaking. You know the inhabitants well, while I have just arrived and am almost a stranger in my own country.”

Old Tasio examined the plans before him with tear-dimmed eyes. “What you are going to do has been my dream, the dream of a poor lunatic!” he exclaimed with emotion. “And now the first thing that I advise you to do is never to come to consult with me.”

The youth gazed at him in surprise.

“Because the sensible people,” he continued with bitter irony, “would take you for a madman also. The people consider madmen those who do not think as they do, so they hold me as such, which I appreciate, because the day in which they think me returned to sanity, they will deprive [192]me of the little liberty that I’ve purchased at the expense of the reputation of being a sane individual. And who knows but they are right? I do not live according to their rules, my principles and ideals are different. The gobernadorcillo enjoys among them the reputation of being a wise man because he learned nothing more than to serve chocolate and to put up with Padre Damaso’s bad humor, so now he is wealthy, he disturbs the petty destinies of his fellow-townsmen, and at times he even talks of justice. ‘That’s a man of talent,’ think the vulgar, ‘look how from nothing he has made himself great!’ But I, I inherited fortune and position, I have studied, and now I am poor, I am not trusted with the most ridiculous office, and all say, ‘He’s a fool! He doesn’t know how to live!’ The curate calls me ‘philosopher’ as a nickname and gives to understand that I am a charlatan who is making a show of what I learned in the higher schools, when that is exactly what benefits me the least. Perhaps I really am the fool and they the wise ones—who can say?”

The old man shook his head as if to drive away that thought, and continued: “The second thing I can advise is that you consult the curate, the gobernadorcillo, and all persons in authority. They will give you bad, stupid, or useless advice, but consultation doesn’t mean compliance,

although you should make it appear that you are taking their advice and acting according to it."

Ibarra reflected a moment before he replied: "The advice is good, but difficult to follow. Couldn't I go ahead with my idea without a shadow being thrown upon it? Couldn't a worthy enterprise make its way over everything, since truth doesn't need to borrow garments from error?"

"Nobody loves the naked truth!" answered the old man. "That is good in theory and practicable in the world of which youth dreams. Here is the schoolmaster, who has struggled in a vacuum; with the enthusiasm of a child, he has sought the good, yet he has won only jests and [193]laughter. You have said that you are a stranger in your own country, and I believe it. The very first day you arrived you began by wounding the vanity of a priest who is regarded by the people as a saint, and as a sage among his fellows. God grant that such a misstep may not have already determined your future! Because the Dominicans and Augustinians look with disdain on the*guingón* habit, the rope girdle, and the immodest foot-wear, because a learned doctor in Santo Tomas[1] may have once recalled that Pope Innocent III described the statutes of that order as more fit for hogs than men, don't believe but that all of them work hand in hand to affirm what a preacher once said, 'The most insignificant lay brother can do more than the government with all its soldiers!'*Cave ne cadas!*[2] Gold is powerful—the golden calf has thrown God down from His altars many times, and that too since the days of Moses!"

"I'm not so pessimistic nor does life appear to me so perilous in my country," said Ibarra with a smile. "I believe that those fears are somewhat exaggerated and I hope to be able to carry out my plans without meeting any great opposition in that quarter."

"Yes, if they extend their hands to you; no, if they withhold them. All your efforts will be shattered against the walls of the rectory if the friar so much as waves his girdle or shakes his habit; tomorrow the alcalde will on some pretext deny you what today he has granted; no mother will allow her son to attend the school, and then all your labors will produce a counter-effect—they will dishearten those who afterwards may wish to attempt altruistic undertakings."

[194]"But, after all," replied the youth, "I can't believe in that power of which you speak, and even supposing it to exist and making allowance for it, I should still have on my side the sensible people and the government, which is animated by the best intentions, which has great hopes, and which frankly desires the welfare of the Philippines."

"The government! The government!" muttered the Sage, raising his eyes to stare at the ceiling. "However inspired it may be with the desire for fostering the greatness of the country for the benefit of the country itself and of the mother country, however some official or other may recall the generous spirit of the Catholic Kings[3] and may agree with it, too, the government sees nothing, hears nothing, nor does it decide anything, except what the curate or the Provincial causes it to see, hear, and decide. The government is convinced that it depends for its salvation wholly on them, that it is sustained because they uphold it, and that the day on which they cease to support it, it will fall like a manikin that has lost its prop. They intimidate the government with an uprising of the people and the people with the forces of the government, whence originates a simple game, very much like what happens to timid persons when they visit gloomy places, taking for ghosts their own shadows and for strange voices the echoes of their own. As long as the government does not deal directly with the country it will not get away from this tutelage, it will live like those imbecile youths who tremble at the voice of their tutor, whose kindness they are begging for. The government has no dream of a healthy future; it is the arm, while the head is the convento. By this inertia with which it allows itself to be dragged from depth to depth, it becomes changed into a shadow, its integrity is impaired, and in a weak and incapable way it trusts everything to mercenary hands. But compare our [195]system of government with those of the countries you have visited—"

"Oh!" interrupted Ibarra, "that's asking too much! Let us content ourselves with observing that our people do not complain or suffer as do the people of other countries, thanks to Religion and the benignity of the governing powers.

"This people does not complain because it has no voice, it does not move because it is lethargic, and you say that it does not suffer because you haven't seen how its heart bleeds. But some day you will see this, you will hear its complaints, and then woe unto those who found their strength on

ignorance and fanaticism! Woe unto those who rejoice in deceit and labor during the night, believing that all are asleep! When the light of day shows up the monsters of darkness, the frightful reaction will come. So many sighs suppressed, so much poison distilled drop by drop, so much force repressed for centuries, will come to light and burst! Who then will pay those accounts which oppressed peoples present from time to time and which History preserves for us on her bloody pages?"

"God, the government, and Religion will not allow that day to come!" replied Ibarra, impressed in spite of himself. "The Philippines is religious and loves Spain, the Philippines will realize how much the nation is doing for her. There are abuses, yes, there are defects, that cannot be denied, but Spain is laboring to introduce reforms that will correct these abuses and defects, she is formulating plans, she is not selfish!"

"I know it, and that is the worst of it! The reforms which emanate from the higher places are annulled in the lower circles, thanks to the vices of all, thanks, for instance, to the eager desire to get rich in a short time, and to the ignorance of the people, who consent to everything. A royal decree does not correct abuses when there is no zealous authority to watch over its execution, while freedom of speech against the insolence of petty tyrants is not conceded. [196]Plans will remain plans, abuses will still be abuses, and the satisfied ministry will sleep in peace in spite of everything. Moreover, if perchance there does come into a high place a person with great and generous ideas, he will begin to hear, while behind his back he is considered a fool, 'Your Excellency does not know the country, your Excellency does not understand the character of the Indians, your Excellency is going to ruin them, your Excellency will do well to trust So-and-so,' and his Excellency in fact does not know the country, for he has been until now stationed in America, and besides that, he has all the shortcomings and weaknesses of other men, so he allows himself to be convinced. His Excellency also remembers that to secure the appointment he has had to sweat much and suffer more, that he holds it for only three years, that he is getting old and that it is necessary to think, not of quixotisms, but of the future: a modest mansion in Madrid, a cozy house in the country, and a good income in order to live in luxury at the capital—these are what he must look for in the Philippines. Let us not ask for miracles, let us not ask that he who comes as an outsider to make his fortune and go away afterwards should interest

himself in the welfare of the country. What matters to him the gratitude or the curses of a people whom he does not know, in a country where he has no associations, where he has no affections? Fame to be sweet must resound in the ears of those we love, in the atmosphere of our home or of the land that will guard our ashes; we wish that fame should hover over our tomb to warm with its breath the chill of death, so that we may not be completely reduced to nothingness, that something of us may survive. Naught of this can we offer to those who come to watch over our destinies. And the worst of all this is that they go away just when they are beginning to get an understanding of their duties. But we are getting away from our subject."

"But before getting back to it I must make some [197]things plain," interrupted the youth eagerly. "I can admit that the government does not know the people, but I believe that the people know the government even less. There are useless officials, bad ones, if you wish, but there are also good ones, and if these are unable to do anything it is because they meet with an inert mass, the people, who take little part in the affairs that concern them. But I didn't come to hold a discussion with you on that point, I came to ask for advice and you tell me to lower my head before grotesque idols!"

"Yes, I repeat it, because here you must either lower your head or lose it."

"Either lower my head or lose it!" repeated Ibarra thoughtfully. "The dilemma is hard! But why? Is love for my country incompatible with love for Spain? Is it necessary to debase oneself to be a good Christian, to prostitute one's conscience in order to carry out a good purpose? I love my native land, the Philippines, because to it I owe my life and my happiness, because every man should love his country. I love Spain, the fatherland of my ancestors, because in spite of everything the Philippines owes to it, and will continue to owe, her happiness and her future. I am a Catholic, I preserve pure the faith of my fathers, and I do not see why I have to lower my head when I can raise it, to give it over to my enemies when I can humble them!"

"Because the field in which you wish to sow is in possession of your enemies and against them you are powerless. It is necessary that you first kiss the hand that—"

But the youth let him go no farther, exclaiming passionately, "Kiss their hands! You forget that among them they killed my father and threw his

body from the tomb! I who am his son do not forget it, and that I do not avenge it is because I have regard for the good name of the Church!"

The old Sage bowed his head as he answered slowly: "Señor Ibarra, if you preserve those memories, which I [198]cannot counsel you to forget, abandon the enterprise you are undertaking and seek in some other way the welfare of your countrymen. The enterprise needs another man, because to make it a success zeal and money alone are not sufficient; in our country are required also self-denial, tenacity of purpose, and faith, for the soil is not ready, it is only sown with discord."
Ibarra appreciated the value of these observations, but still would not be discouraged. The thought of Maria Clara was in his mind and his promise must be fulfilled.

"Doesn't your experience suggest any other than this hard means?" he asked in a low voice.

The old man took him by the arm and led him to the window. A fresh breeze, the precursor of the north wind, was blowing, and before their eyes spread out the garden bounded by the wide forest that was a kind of park.

"Why can we not do as that weak stalk laden with flowers and buds does?" asked the Sage, pointing to a beautiful jasmine plant. "The wind blows and shakes it and it bows its head as if to hide its precious load. If the stalk should hold itself erect it would be broken, its flowers would be scattered by the wind, and its buds would be blighted. The wind passes by and the stalk raises itself erect, proud of its treasure, yet who will blame it for having bowed before necessity? There you see that gigantic *kupang*, which majestically waves its light foliage wherein the eagle builds his nest. I brought it from the forest as a weak sapling and braced its stem for months with slender pieces of bamboo. If I had transplanted it large and full of life, it is certain that it would not have lived here, for the wind would have thrown it down before its roots could have fixed themselves in the soil, before it could have become accustomed to its surroundings, and before it could have secured sufficient nourishment for its size and height. So you, transplanted from Europe to this stony soil, may end, if you do not seek support and do not humble yourself. You are among evil conditions, alone, [199]elevated, the ground shakes, the sky presages a storm, and the top of your family tree has shown that it draws the thunderbolt. It is not

courage, but foolhardiness, to fight alone against all that exists. No one censures the pilot who makes for a port at the first gust of the whirlwind. To stoop as the bullet passes is not cowardly—it is worse to defy it only to fall, never to rise again."

"But could this sacrifice produce the fruit that I hope for?" asked Ibarra. "Would the priest believe in me and forget the affront? Would they aid me frankly in behalf of the education that contests with the conventos the wealth of the country? Can they not pretend friendship, make a show of protection, and yet underneath in the shadows fight it, undermine it, wound it in the heel, in order to weaken it quicker than by attacking it in front? Granted the previous actions which you surmise, anything may be expected!"

The old man remained silent from inability to answer these questions. After meditating for some time, he said: "If such should happen, if the enterprise should fail, you would be consoled by the thought that you had done what was expected of you and thus something would be gained. You would have placed the first stone, you would have sown the seed, and after the storm had spent itself perhaps some grain would have survived the catastrophe to grow and save the species from destruction and to serve afterwards as the seed for the sons of the dead sower. The example may encourage others who are only afraid to begin."

Weighing these reasons, Ibarra realized the situation and saw that with all the old man's pessimism there was a great deal of truth in what he said.

"I believe you!" he exclaimed, pressing the old man's hand. "Not in vain have I looked to you for advice. This very day I'll go and reach an understanding with the curate, who, after all is said, has done me no wrong and who must be good, since all of them are not like the [200]persecutor of my father. I have, besides, to interest him in behalf of that unfortunate madwoman and her sons. I put my trust in God and men!"

After taking leave of the old man he mounted his horse and rode away. As the pessimistic Sage followed him with his gaze, he muttered: "Now let's watch how Destiny will unfold the drama that began in the cemetery." But for once he was greatly mistaken—the drama had begun long before![201]

[1]The College of Santo Tomas was established in 1619 through a legacy of books and money left for that purpose by Fray Miguel de Benavides, O. P., second archbishop of Manila. By royal decree and papal bull, it became in 1645 the Royal and Pontifical University of Santo Tomas, and never, during the Spanish régime, got beyond the Thomistic theology in its courses of instruction.—TR.

[2]Take heed lest you fall!

[3]Ferdinand and Isabella, the builders of Spain's greatness, are known in Spanish history as "Los Reyes Católicos."—TR.

[Contents]

Chapter XXVI
The Eve of the Fiesta

It is now the tenth of November, the eve of the fiesta. Emerging from its habitual monotony, the town has given itself over to unwonted activity in house, church, cockpit, and field. Windows are covered with banners and many-hued draperies. All space is filled with noise and music, and the air is saturated with rejoicings.

On little tables with embroidered covers the *dalagas* arrange in bright-hued glass dishes different kinds of sweetmeats made from native fruits. In the yard the hens cackle, the cocks crow, and the hogs grunt, all terrified by this merriment of man. Servants move in and out carrying fancy dishes and silver cutlery. Here there is a quarrel over a broken plate, there they laugh at the simple country girl. Everywhere there is ordering, whispering, shouting. Comments and conjectures are made, one hurries the other,—all is commotion, noise, and confusion. All this effort and all this toil are for the stranger as well as the acquaintance, to entertain every one, whether he has been seen before or not, or whether he is expected to be seen again, in order that the casual visitor, the foreigner, friend, enemy, Filipino, Spaniard, the poor and the rich, may go away happy and contented. No gratitude is even asked of them nor is it expected that they do no damage to the hospitable family either during or after digestion! The rich, those who have ever been to Manila and have seen a little more than their neighbors, have bought beer, champagne, liqueurs, wines, and food-stuffs from Europe, of which they will hardly taste a bite or drink a drop.

Their tables are luxuriously furnished. In the center [202]is a well-modeled artificial pineapple in which are arranged toothpicks elaborately carved by convicts in their rest-hours. Here they have designed a fan, there a bouquet of flowers, a bird, a rose, a palm leaf, or a chain, all wrought from a single piece of wood, the artisan being a forced laborer, the tool a dull knife, and the taskmaster’s voice the inspiration. Around this toothpick-holder are placed glass fruit-trays from which rise pyramids of oranges, lansons, ates, chicos, and even mangos in spite of the fact that it is November. On wide platters upon bright-hued sheets of perforated paper are to be seen hams from Europe and China, stuffed turkeys, and a big pastry in the shape of an

Agnus Dei or a dove, the Holy Ghost perhaps. Among all these are jars of appetizing *acharas* with fanciful decorations made from the flowers of the areca palm and other fruits and vegetables, all tastefully cut and fastened with sirup to the sides of the flasks.

Glass lamp globes that have been handed down from father to son are cleaned, the copper ornaments polished, the kerosene lamps taken out of the red wrappings which have protected them from the flies and mosquitoes during the year and which have made them unserviceable; the prismatic glass pendants shake to and fro, they clink together harmoniously in song, and even seem to take part in the fiesta as they flash back and break up the rays of light, reflecting them on the white walls in all the colors of the rainbow. The children play about amusing themselves by chasing the colors, they stumble and break the globes, but this does not interfere with the general merriment, although at other times in the year the tears in their round eyes would be taken account of in a different way.

Along with these venerated lamps there also come forth from their hiding-places the work of the girls: crocheted scarfs, rugs, artificial flowers. There appear old glass trays, on the bottoms of which are sketched miniature lakes with little fishes, caymans, shell-fish, seaweeds, coral, and glassy stones of brilliant hues. These are heaped [203]with cigars, cigarettes, and diminutive buyos prepared by the delicate fingers of the maidens. The floor of the house shines like a mirror, curtains of piña and husi festoon the doorways, from the windows hang lanterns covered with glass or with paper, pink, blue, green, or red. The house itself is filled with plants and flower-pots on stands of Chinese porcelain. Even the saints bedeck themselves, the images and relics put on a festive air, the dust is brushed from them and on the freshly-washed glass of their cases are hung flowery garlands.

In the streets are raised at intervals fanciful bamboo arches, known as *sinkában*, constructed in various ways and adorned with*kaluskús*, the curling bunches of shavings scraped on their sides, at the sight of which alone the hearts of the children rejoice. About the front of the church, where the procession is to pass, is a large and costly canopy upheld on bamboo posts. Beneath this the children run and play, climbing, jumping, and tearing the new camisas in which they should shine on the principal day of the fiesta.

There on the plaza a platform has been erected, the scenery being of bamboo, nipa, and wood; there the Tondo comedians will perform wonders and compete with the gods in improbable miracles, there will sing and dance Marianito, Chananay, Balbino, Ratia, Carvajal, Yeyeng, Liceria, etc. The Filipino enjoys the theater and is a deeply interested spectator of dramatic representations, but he listens in silence to the song, he gazes delighted at the dancing and mimicry, he never hisses or applauds.

If the show is not to his liking, he chews his buyo or withdraws without disturbing the others who perhaps find pleasure in it. Only at times the commoner sort will howl when the actors embrace or kiss the actresses, but they never go beyond that. Formerly, dramas only were played; the local poet composed a piece in which there must necessarily be a fight every second minute, a clown, and terrifying transformations. But since the Tondo artist [204]have begun to fight every fifteen seconds, with two clowns, and even greater marvels than before, they have put to rout their provincial compeers. The gobernadorcillo was very fond of this sort of thing, so, with the approval of the curate, he chose a spectacle with magic and fireworks, entitled, "The Prince Villardo or the Captives Rescued from the Infamous Cave."[1]

From time to time the bells chime out merrily, those same bells that ten days ago were tolling so mournfully. Pin-wheels and mortars rend the air, for the Filipino pyrotechnist, who learned the art from no known instructor, displays his ability by preparing fire bulls, castles of Bengal lights, paper balloons inflated with hot air, bombs, rockets, and the like.

Now distant strains of music are heard and the small boys rush headlong toward the outskirts of the town to meet the bands of music, five of which have been engaged, as well as three orchestras. The band of Pagsanhan belonging to the escribano must not be lacking nor that of San Pedro de Tunasan, at that time famous because it was directed by the maestro Austria, the vagabond "Corporal Mariano" who, according to report, carried fame and harmony in the tip of his baton. Musicians praise his funeral march, "El Sauce,"[2]and deplore his lack of musical education, since with his genius he might have brought glory to his country. The bands enter the town playing lively airs, followed by ragged or half-naked urchins, one in the camisa of his brother, another in his father's pantaloons. As soon as the

band ceases, the boys know the piece by heart, they hum and whistle it with rare skill, they pronounce their judgment upon it.

[205]Meanwhile, there are arriving in conveyances of all kinds relatives, friends, strangers, the gamblers with their best game-cocks and their bags of gold, ready to risk their fortune on the green cloth or within the arena of the cockpit.

"The alferez has fifty pesos for each night," murmurs a small, chubby individual into the ears of the latest arrivals. "Capitan Tiago's coming and will set up a bank; Capitan Joaquin's bringing eighteen thousand. There'll be *liam-pó*: Carlos the Chinaman will set it up with ten thousand. Big stakes are coming from Tanawan, Lipa, and Batangas, as well as from Santa Cruz.3 It's going to be on a big scale, yes, sir, on a grand scale! But have some chocolate! This year Capitan Tiago won't break us as he did last, since he's paid for only three thanksgiving masses and I've got a cacao *mutyâ*. And how's your family?"

"Well, thank you," the visitors respond, "and Padre Damaso?"

"Padre Damaso will preach in the morning and sit in with us at night."

"Good enough! Then there's no danger."

"Sure, we're sure! Carlos the Chinaman will loosen up also." Here the chubby individual works his fingers as though counting out pieces of money.

Outside the town the hill-folk, the *kasamá*, are putting on their best clothes to carry to the houses of their landlords well-fattened chickens, wild pigs, deer, and birds. Some load firewood on the heavy carts, others fruits, ferns, and orchids, the rarest that grow in the forests, others bring broad-leafed caladiums and flame-colored *tikas-tikas* blossoms to decorate the doors of the houses.

But the place where the greatest activity reigns, where it is converted into a tumult, is there on a little plot of [206]raised ground, a few steps from Ibarra's house. Pulleys screech and yells are heard amid the metallic sound of iron striking upon stone, hammers upon nails, of axes chopping out posts. A crowd of laborers is digging in the earth to open a wide, deep trench, while others place in line the stones taken from the town quarries.

Carts are unloaded, piles of sand are heaped up, windlasses and derricks are set in place.
“Hey, you there! Hurry up!” cries a little old man with lively and intelligent features, who has for a cane a copper-bound rule around which is wound the cord of a plumb-bob. This is the foreman of the work, Ñor Juan, architect, mason, carpenter, painter, locksmith, stonecutter, and, on occasions, sculptor. “It must be finished right now! Tomorrow there’ll be no work and the day after tomorrow is the ceremony. Hurry!”

“Cut that hole so that this cylinder will fit it exactly,” he says to some masons who are shaping a large square block of stone. “Within that our names will be preserved.”

He repeats to every newcomer who approaches the place what he has already said a thousand times: “You know what we’re going to build? Well, it’s a schoolhouse, a model of its kind, like those in Germany, and even better. A great architect has drawn the plans, and I—I am bossing the job! Yes, sir, look at it, it’s going to be a palace with two wings, one for the boys and the other for the girls. Here in the middle a big garden with three fountains, there on the sides shaded walks with little plots for the children to sow and cultivate plants in during their recess-time, that they may improve the hours and not waste them. Look how deep the foundations are, three meters and seventy-five centimeters! This building is going to have storerooms, cellars, and for those who are not diligent students dungeons near the playgrounds so that the culprits may hear how the studious children are enjoying themselves. Do you see that big space? That will be a lawn for running and exercising in the open air. The little girls [207]will have a garden with benches, swings, walks where they can jump the rope, fountains, bird-cages, and so on. It’s going to be magnificent!”
Then Ñor Juan would rub his hands together as he thought of the fame that he was going to acquire. Strangers would come to see it and would ask, “Who was the great artisan that built this?” and all would answer, “Don’t you know? Can it be that you’ve never heard of Ñor Juan? Undoubtedly you’ve come from a great distance!” With these thoughts he moved from one part to the other, examining and reexamining everything.

“It seems to me that there’s too much timber for one derrick,” he remarked to a yellowish man who was overseeing some laborers. “I should have

enough with three large beams for the tripod and three more for the braces."

"Never mind!" answered the yellowish man, smiling in a peculiar way. "The more apparatus we use in the work, so much the greater effect we'll get. The whole thing will look better and of more importance, so they'll say, 'How hard they've worked!' You'll see, you'll see what a derrick I'll put up! Then I'll decorate it with banners, and garlands of leaves and flowers. You'll say afterwards that you were right in hiring me as one of your laborers, and Señor Ibarra couldn't ask for more!" As he said this the man laughed and smiled. Ñor Juan also smiled, but shook his head.

Some distance away were seen two kiosks united by a kind of arbor covered with banana leaves. The schoolmaster and some thirty boys were weaving crowns and fastening banners upon the frail bamboo posts, which were wrapped in white cloth.

"Take care that the letters are well written," he admonished the boys who were preparing inscriptions. "The alcalde is coming, many curates will be present, perhaps even the Captain-General, who is now in the province. If they see that you draw well, maybe they'll praise you."

[208]"And give us a blackboard?"
"Perhaps, but Señor Ibarra has already ordered one from Manila. Tomorrow some things will come to be distributed among you as prizes. Leave those flowers in the water and tomorrow we'll make the bouquets. Bring more flowers, for it's necessary that the table be covered with them—flowers please the eye."

"My father will bring some water-lilies and a basket of sampaguitas tomorrow."

"Mine has brought three cartloads of sand without pay."

"My uncle has promised to pay a teacher," added a nephew of Capitan Basilio.

Truly, the project was receiving help from all. The curate had asked to stand sponsor for it and himself bless the laying of the corner-stone, a ceremony to take place on the last day of the fiesta as one of its greatest solemnities. The very coadjutor had timidly approached Ibarra with an offer of all the

fees for masses that the devout would pay until the building was finished. Even more, the rich and economical Sister Rufa had declared that if money should be lacking she would canvass other towns and beg for alms, with the mere condition that she be paid her expenses for travel and subsistence. Ibarra thanked them all, as he answered, "We aren't going to have anything very great, since I am not rich and this building is not a church. Besides, I didn't undertake to erect it at the expense of others."

The younger men, students from Manila, who had come to take part in the fiesta, gazed at him in admiration and took him for a model; but, as it nearly always happens, when we wish to imitate great men, that we copy only their foibles and even their defects, since we are capable of nothing else, so many of these admirers took note of the way in which he tied his cravat, others of the style of his collar, and not a few of the number of buttons on his coat and vest.

[209]The funereal presentiments of old Tasio seemed to have been dissipated forever. So Ibarra observed to him one day, but the old pessimist answered: "Remember what Baltazar says:

Kung ang isalúbong sa iyong pagdating
Ay masayang maukha't may pakitang giliw,
Lalong pag-iñgata't kaaway na lihim[4]—

Baltazar was no less a thinker than a poet."

Thus in the gathering shadows before the setting of the sun events were shaping themselves.[210]

[1]These spectacular performances, known as "Moro-Moro," often continued for several days, consisting principally of noisy combats between Moros and Christians, in which the latter were, of course, invariably victorious. Typical sketches of them may be found in Foreman's *The Philippine Islands*, Chap. XXIII, and Stuntz's *The Philippines and the Far East*, Chap. III.—TR.

[2]"The Willow."

[3]The capital of Laguna Province, not to be confused with the Santa Cruz mentioned before, which is a populous and important district in the city of Manila. Tanawan, Lipa, and Batangas are towns in Batangas Province, the latter being its capital.—TR.

[4]"If on your return you are met with a smile, beware! for it means that you have a secret enemy."—From the *Florante*, being the advice given to the hero by his old teacher when he set out to return to his home.

Francisco Baltazar was a Tagalog poet, native of the province of Bulacan, born about 1788, and died in 1862. The greater part of his life was spent in Manila,—in Tondo and in Pandakan, a quaint little village on the south bank of the Pasig, now included in the city, where he appears to have shared the fate largely of poets of other lands, from suffering "the pangs of disprized love" and persecution by the religious authorities, to seeing himself considered by the people about him as a crack-brained dreamer. He was educated in the Dominican school of San Juan de Letran, one of his teachers being Fray Mariano Pilapil, about whose services to humanity there may be some difference of opinion on the part of those who have ever resided in Philippine towns, since he was the author of the "Passion Song" which enlivens the Lenten evenings. This "Passion Song," however, seems to have furnished the model for Baltazar's *Florante*, with the pupil surpassing the master, for while it has the subject and characters of a medieval European romance, the spirit and settings are entirely Malay. It is written in the peculiar Tagalog verse, in the form of a *corrido* or metrical romance, and has been declared by Fray Toribio Menguella, Rizal himself, and others familiar with Tagalog, to be a work of no mean order, by far the finest and most characteristic composition in that, the richest of the Malay dialects.—TR.

[Contents]

Chapter XXVII
In the Twilight

In Capitan Tiago's house also great preparations had been made. We know its owner, whose love of ostentation and whose pride as a Manilan imposed the necessity of humiliating the provincials with his splendor. Another reason, too, made it his duty to eclipse all others: he had his daughter Maria Clara with him, and there was present his future son-in-law, who was attracting universal attention.

In fact one of the most serious newspapers in Manila had devoted to Ibarra an article on its front page, entitled, "Imitate him!" heaping him with praise and giving him some advice. It had called him, "The cultivated young gentleman and rich capitalist;" two lines further on, "The distinguished philanthropist;" in the following paragraph, "The disciple of Minerva who had gone to the mother country to pay his respects to the true home of the arts and sciences;" and a little further on, "The Filipino Spaniard." Capitan Tiago burned with generous zeal to imitate him and wondered whether he ought not to erect a convento at his own expense.

Some days before there had arrived at the house where Maria Clara and Aunt Isabel were staying a profusion of eases of European wines and food-stuffs, colossal mirrors, paintings, and Maria Clara's piano. Capitan Tiago had arrived on the day before the fiesta and as his daughter kissed his hand, had presented her with a beautiful locket set with diamonds and emeralds, containing a sliver fromSt. Peter's boat, in which Our Savior sat during the fishing. His first interview with his future son-in-law could not [211]have been more cordial. Naturally, they talked about the school, and Capitan Tiago wanted it named "School of St. Francis." "Believe me," he said, "St. Francis is a good patron. If you call it 'School of Primary Instruction,' you will gain nothing. Who is Primary Instruction, anyhow?"
Some friends of Maria Clara came and asked her to go for a walk. "But come back quickly," said Capitan Tiago to his daughter, when she asked his permission, "for you know that Padre Damaso, who has just arrived, will dine with us."

Then turning to Ibarra, who had become thoughtful, he said, "You dine with us also, you'll be all alone in your house."

“I would with the greatest pleasure, but I have to be at home in case visitors come,” stammered the youth, as he avoided the gaze of Maria Clara.

“Bring your friends along,” replied Capitan Tiago heartily. “In my house there’s always plenty to eat. Also, I want you and Padre Damaso to get on good terms.”

“There’ll be time enough for that,” answered Ibarra with a forced smile, as he prepared to accompany the girls.

They went downstairs, Maria Clara in the center between Victoria and Iday, Aunt Isabel following. The people made way for them respectfully. Maria Clara was startling in her beauty; her pallor was all gone, and if her eyes were still pensive, her mouth on the contrary seemed to know only smiles. With maiden friendliness the happy young woman greeted the acquaintances of her childhood, now the admirers of her promising youth. In less than a fortnight she had succeeded in recovering that frank confidence, that childish prattle, which seemed to have been benumbed between the narrow walls of the nunnery. It might be said that on leaving the cocoon the butterfly recognized all the flowers, for it seemed to be enough for her to spread her wings for a moment and warm herself [212]in the sun’s rays to lose all the stiffness of the chrysalis. This new life manifested itself in her whole nature. Everything she found good and beautiful, and she showed her love with that maiden modesty which, having never been conscious of any but pure thoughts, knows not the meaning of false blushes. While she would cover her face when she was teased, still her eyes smiled, and a light thrill would course through her whole being.

The houses were beginning to show lights, and in the streets where the music was moving about there were lighted torches of bamboo and wood made in imitation of those in the church. From the streets the people in the houses might be seen through the windows in an atmosphere of music and flowers, moving about to the sounds of piano, harp, or orchestra. Swarming in the streets were Chinese, Spaniards, Filipinos, some dressed in European style, some in the costumes of the country. Crowding, elbowing, and pushing one another, walked servants carrying meat and chickens, students in white, men and women, all exposing themselves to be knocked down by the carriages which, in spite of the drivers’ cries, made their way with difficulty.

In front of Capitan Basilio's house some young women called to our acquaintances and invited them to enter. The merry voice of Sinang as she ran down the stairs put an end to all excuses. "Come up a moment so that I may go with you," she said. "I'm bored staying here among so many strangers who talk only of game-cocks and cards."

They were ushered into a large room filled with people, some of whom came forward to greet Ibarra, for his name was now well known. All gazed in ecstasy at the beauty of Maria Clara and some old women murmured, as they chewed their buyo, "She looks like the Virgin!"

There they had to have chocolate, as Capitan Basilio had become a warm friend and defender of Ibarra since the day of the picnic. He had learned from the half of the [213]telegram given to his daughter Sinang that Ibarra had known beforehand about the court's decision in the latter's favor, so, not wishing to be outdone in generosity, he had tried to set aside the decision of the chess-match. But when Ibarra would not consent to this, he had proposed that the money which would have been spent in court fees should be used to pay a teacher in the new school. In consequence, the orator employed all his eloquence to the end that other litigants should give up their extravagant claims, saying to them, "Believe me, in a lawsuit the winner is left without a camisa." But he had succeeded in convincing no one, even though he cited the Romans.
After drinking the chocolate our young people had to listen to piano-playing by the town organist. "When I listen to him in the church," exclaimed Sinang, pointing to the organist, "I want to dance, and now that he's playing here I feel like praying, so I'm going out with you."

"Don't you want to join us tonight?" whispered Capitan Basilio into Ibarra's ear as they were leaving. "Padre Damaso is going to set up a little bank." Ibarra smiled and answered with an equivocal shake of his head.

"Who's that?" asked Maria Clara of Victoria, indicating with a rapid glance a youth who was following them.

"He's—he's a cousin of mine," she answered with some agitation.

"And the other?"

"He's no cousin of mine," put in Sinang merrily. "He's my uncle's son."

They passed in front of the parish rectory, which was not one of the least animated buildings. Sinang was unable to repress an exclamation of surprise on seeing the lamps burning, those lamps of antique pattern which Padre Salvi had never allowed to be lighted, in order not to waste kerosene. Loud talk and resounding bursts of laughter might be heard as the friars moved slowly about, nodding their heads in unison with the big cigars that adorned their [214]lips. The laymen with them, who from their European garments appeared to be officials and employees of the province, were endeavoring to imitate whatever the good priests did. Maria Clara made out the rotund figure of Padre Damaso at the side of the trim silhouette of Padre Sibyla. Motionless in his place stood the silent and mysterious Fray Salvi.
"He's sad," observed Sinang, "for he's thinking about how much so many visitors are going to cost. But you'll see how he'll not pay it himself, but the sacristans will. His visitors always eat at other places."

"Sinang!" scolded Victoria.

"I haven't been able to endure him since he tore up the *Wheel of Fortune*. I don't go to confession to him any more."

Of all the houses one only was to be noticed without lights and with all the windows closed—that of the alferez. Maria Clara expressed surprise at this.

"The witch! The Muse of the Civil Guard, as the old man says," exclaimed the irrepressible Sinang. "What has she to do with our merrymakings? I imagine she's raging! But just let the cholera come and you'd see her give a banquet."

"But, Sinang!" again her cousin scolded.

"I never was able to endure her and especially since she disturbed our picnic with her civil-guards. If I were the Archbishop I'd marry Her to Padre Salvi—then think what children! Look how she tried to arrest the poor pilot, who threw himself into the water simply to please—"

She was not allowed to finish, for in the corner of the plaza where a blind man was singing to the accompaniment of a guitar, a curious spectacle was presented. It was a man miserably dressed, wearing a broad salakot of palm leaves. His clothing consisted of a ragged coat and wide pantaloons, like those worn by the Chinese, torn in many places. Wretched sandals covered

his feet. His countenance remained hidden in the shadow of his wide [215]hat, but from this shadow there flashed intermittently two burning rays. Placing a flat basket on the ground, he would withdraw a few paces and utter strange, incomprehensible sounds, remaining the while standing entirely alone as if he and the crowd were mutually avoiding each other. Then some women would approach the basket and put into it fruit, fish, or rice. When no one any longer approached, from the shadows would issue sadder but less pitiful sounds, cries of gratitude perhaps. Then he would take up the basket and make his way to another place to repeat the same performance.

Maria Clara divined that there must be some misfortune there, and full of interest she asked concerning the strange creature.

"He's a leper," Iday told her. "Four years ago he contracted the disease, some say from taking care of his mother, others from lying in a damp prison. He lives in the fields near the Chinese cemetery, having intercourse with no one, because all flee from him for fear of contagion. If you might only see his home! It's a tumbledown shack, through which the wind and rain pass like a needle through cloth. He has been forbidden to touch anything belonging to the people. One day when a little child fell into a shallow ditch as he was passing, he helped to get it out. The child's father complained to the gobernadorcillo, who ordered that the leper be flogged through the streets and that the rattan be burned afterwards. It was horrible! The leper fled with his flogger in pursuit, while the gobernadorcillo cried, 'Catch him! Better be drowned than get the disease you have!'"

"Can it be true!" murmured Maria Clara, then, without saying what she was about to do, went up to the wretch's basket and dropped into it the locket her father had given her.

"What have you done?" her friends asked.

"I hadn't anything else," she answered, trying to conceal her tears with a smile.

[216]"What is he going to do with your locket?" Victoria asked her. "One day they gave him some money, but he pushed it away with a stick; why should he want it when no one accepts anything that comes from him? As if the locket could be eaten!"

Maria Clara gazed enviously at the women who were selling food-stuffs and shrugged her shoulders. The leper approached the basket, picked up the jeweled locket, which glittered in his hands, then fell upon his knees, kissed it, and taking off his salakot buried his forehead in the dust where the maiden had stepped. Maria Clara hid her face behind her fan and raised her handkerchief to her eyes.

Meanwhile, a poor woman had approached the leper, who seemed to be praying. Her long hair was loose and unkempt, and in the light of the torches could be recognized the extremely emaciated features of the crazy Sisa. Feeling the touch of her hand, the leper jumped up with a cry, but to the horror of the onlooker's Sisa caught him by the arm and said:

"Let us pray, let us pray! Today is All Souls' day! Those lights are the souls of men! Let us pray for my sons!"

"Separate them! Separate them! The madwoman will get the disease!" cried the crowd, but no one dared to go near them.

"Do you see that light in the tower? That is my son Basilio sliding down a rope! Do you see that light in the convento? That is my son Crispin! But I'm not going to see them because the curate is sick and had many gold pieces and the gold pieces are lost! Pray, let us pray for the soul of the curate! I took him the finest fruits, for my garden was full of flowers and I had two sons! I had a garden, I used to take care of my flowers, and I had two sons!"

Then releasing her hold of the leper, she ran away singing, "I had a garden and flowers, I had two sons, a garden, and flowers!"

[217]"What have you been able to do for that poor woman?" Maria Clara asked Ibarra.
"Nothing! Lately she has been missing from the totem and wasn't to be found," answered the youth, rather confusedly. "Besides, I have been very busy. But don't let it trouble you. The curate has promised to help me, but advised that I proceed with great tact and caution, for the Civil Guard seems to be mixed up in it. The curate is greatly interested in her case."

"Didn't the alferez say that he would have search made for her sons?"

“Yes, but at the time he was somewhat—drunk.” Scarcely had he said this when they saw the crazy woman being led, or rather dragged along, by a soldier. Sisa was offering resistance.

“Why are you arresting her? What has she done?” asked Ibarra.

“Why, haven’t you seen how she’s been raising a disturbance?” was the reply of the guardian of the public peace.

The leper caught up his basket hurriedly and ran away.

Maria Clara wanted to go home, as she had lost all her mirth and good humor. “So there are people who are not happy,” she murmured. Arriving at her door, she felt her sadness increase when her fiancé declined to go in, excusing himself on the plea of necessity. Maria Clara went upstairs thinking what a bore are the fiesta days, when strangers make their visits.

Chapter XXVIII
Correspondence

Cada uno habla de la feria como le va en ella.1

As nothing of importance to our characters happened during the first two days, we should gladly pass on to the third and last, were it not that perhaps some foreign reader may wish to know how the Filipinos celebrate their fiestas. For this reason we shall faithfully reproduce in this chapter several letters, one of them being that of the correspondent of a noted Manila newspaper, respected for its grave tone and deep seriousness. Our readers will correct some natural and trifling slips of the pen. Thus the worthy correspondent of the respectable newspaper wrote:

"TO THE EDITOR, MY DISTINGUISHED FRIEND,—Never did I witness, nor had I ever expected to see in the provinces, a religious fiesta so solemn, so splendid, and so impressive as that now being celebrated in this town by the Most Reverend and virtuous Franciscan Fathers.

"Great crowds are in attendance. I have here had the pleasure of greeting nearly all the Spaniards who reside in this province, three Reverend Augustinian Fathers from the province of Batangas, and two Reverend Dominican Fathers. One of the latter is the Very Reverend Fray Hernando Sibyla, who has come to honor this town with his presence, a distinction which its worthy inhabitants should never forget. I have also seen a great number of the best people of Cavite and Pampanga, many wealthy persons from Manila, and many bands of music,—among these the very artistic one of Pagsanhan belonging to the escribano, Don Miguel Guevara,—swarms of Chinamen [219]and Indians, who, with the curiosity of the former and the piety of the latter, awaited anxiously the day on which was to be celebrated the comic-mimic-lyric-lightning-change-dramatic spectacle, for which a large and spacious theater had been erected in the middle of the plaza.
"At nine on the night of the 10th, the eve of the fiesta, after a succulent dinner set before us by the *hermano mayor*, the attention of all the Spaniards and friars in the convento was attracted by strains of music from a surging multitude which, with the noise of bombs and rockets, preceded by the leading citizens of the town, came to the convento to escort us to the place prepared and arranged for us that we might witness the spectacle. Such a courteous offer we had to accept, although I should have preferred to rest in the arms of Morpheus and repose my weary limbs, which were aching, thanks to the joltings of the vehicle furnished us by the gobernadorcillo of B———.

"Accordingly we joined them and proceeded to look for our companions, who were dining in the house, owned here by the pious and wealthy Don Santiago de los Santos. The curate of the town, the Very Reverend Fray Bernardo Salvi, and the Very Reverend Fray Damaso Verdolagas, who is now by the special favor of Heaven recovered from the suffering caused him by an impious hand, in company with the Very Reverend Fray Hernando Sibyla and the virtuous curate of Tanawan, with other Spaniards, were guests in the house of the Filipino Croesus. There we had the good fortune of admiring not only the luxury and good taste of the host, which are not usual among the natives, but also the beauty of the charming and wealthy heiress, who showed herself to be a polished disciple ofSt. Cecelia by playing on her elegant piano, with a mastery that recalled Galvez to me, the best German and Italian compositions. It is a matter of regret that such a charming young lady should be

so excessively modest as to hide her talents from a society which has only admiration for her. Nor should I leave unwritten that in the house of our host there were set before us champagne and fine liqueurs with the profusion and splendor that characterize the well-known capitalist.

"We attended the spectacle. You already know our artists, Ratia, Carvajal, and Fernandez, whose cleverness was comprehended [220]by us alone, since the uncultured crowd did not understand a jot of it. Chananay and Balbino were very good, though a little hoarse; the latter made one break, but together, and as regards earnest effort, they were admirable. The Indians were greatly pleased with the Tagalog drama, especially the gobernadorcillo, who rubbed his hands and informed us that it was a pity that they had not made the princess join in combat with the giant who had stolen her away, which in his opinion would have been more marvelous, especially if the giant had been represented as vulnerable only in the navel, like a certain Ferragus of whom the stories of the Paladins tell. The Very Reverend Fray Damaso, in his customary goodness of heart, concurred in this opinion, and added that in such case the princess should be made to discover the giant's weak spot and give him the *coup de grace*.
"Needless to tell you that during the show the affability of the Filipino Rothschild allowed nothing to be lacking: ice-cream, lemonade, wines, and refreshments of all kinds circulated profusely among us. A matter of reasonable and special note was the absence of the well-known and cultured youth, Don Juan Crisostomo Ibarra, who, as you know, will tomorrow preside at the laying of the corner-stone for the great edifice which he is so philanthropically erecting. This worthy descendant of the Pelayos and Elcanos (for I have learned that one of his paternal ancestors was from our heroic and noble northern provinces, perhaps one of the companions of Magellan or Legazpi) did not show himself during the entire day, owing to a slight indisposition. His name runs from mouth to mouth, being uttered with praises that can only reflect glory upon Spain and true Spaniards like ourselves, who never deny our blood, however mixed it may be.

"Today, at eleven o'clock in the morning, we attended a deeply-moving spectacle. Today, as is generally known, is the fiesta of the Virgin of Peace and is being observed by the Brethren of the Holy Rosary. Tomorrow will occur the fiesta of the patron, San Diego, and it will be observed principally by the Venerable Tertiary Order. Between these two societies there exists a pious rivalry in serving God, which piety has reached the extreme of holy quarrels among them, as has just happened in the dispute over the preacher of acknowledged [221]fame, the oft-mentioned Very Reverend Fray Damaso, who tomorrow will occupy the pulpit of the Holy Ghost with a sermon, which, according to general expectation, will be a literary and religious event.
"So, *as we were saying*, we attended a highly edifying and moving spectacle. Six pious youths, three to recite the mass and three for acolytes, marched out of the sacristy and prostrated themselves before the altar, while the officiating priest, the Very Reverend Fray Hernando Sibyla, chanted the *Surge Domine*—the signal for commencing the procession around the church—with the magnificent voice and religious unction that all recognize and that make him so worthy of general admiration. When the *Surge Domine* was concluded, the gobernadorcillo, in a frock coat, carrying the standard and followed by four acolytes with incense-burners, headed the procession. Behind them came the tall silver candelabra, the municipal corporation, the precious images dressed in satin and gold, representing St. Dominic and the Virgin of Peace in a magnificent blue robe trimmed with gilded silver, the gift of the pious ex-gobernadorcillo, the so-worthy-of-being-imitated and never-sufficiently-praised Don Santiago de los Santos. All these images were borne on silver cars. Behind the Mother of God came the Spaniards and the rest of the clergy, while the officiating priest was protected by a canopy carried by the cabezas de barangay, and the procession was closed by a squad of the worthy Civil Guard. I believe it unnecessary to state that a multitude of Indians, carrying lighted candles with great devotion, formed the two lines of the procession. The musicians played religious marches, while bombs and pinwheels furnished repeated salutes. It causes admiration to see the modesty and the fervor which these ceremonies inspire in the hearts of the true believers, the

grand, pure faith professed for the Virgin of Peace, the solemnity and fervent devotion with which such ceremonies are performed by those of us who have had the good fortune to be born under the sacrosanct and immaculate banner of Spain.

"The procession concluded, there began the mass rendered by the orchestra and the theatrical artists. After the reading of the Gospel, the Very Reverend Fray Manuel Martin, an Augustinian from the province of Batangas, ascended the [222]pulpit and kept the whole audience enraptured and hanging on his words, especially the Spaniards, during the exordium in Castilian, as he spoke with vigor and in such flowing and well-rounded periods that our hearts were filled with fervor and enthusiasm. This indeed is the term that should be used for what is felt, or what we feel, when the Virgin of our beloved Spain is considered, and above all when there can be intercalated in the text, if the subject permits, the ideas of a prince of the Church, the *Señor Monescillo*,2 which are surely those of all Spaniards.
"At the conclusion of the services all of us went up into the convento with the leading citizens of the town and other persons of note. There we were especially honored by the refinement, attention, and prodigality that characterize the Very Reverend Fray Salvi, there being set before us cigars and an abundant lunch which the *hermano mayor* had prepared under the convento for all who might feel the necessity for appeasing the cravings of their stomachs.

"During the day nothing has been lacking to make the fiesta joyous and to preserve the animation so characteristic of Spaniards, and which it is impossible to restrain on such occasions as this, showing itself sometimes in singing and dancing, at other times in simple and merry diversions of so strong and noble a nature that all sorrow is driven away, and it is enough for three Spaniards to be gathered together in one place in order that sadness and ill-humor be banished thence. Then homage was paid to Terpsichore in many homes, but especially in that of the cultured Filipino millionaire, where we were all invited to dine. Needless to say, the banquet, which was sumptuous and elegantly served, was a second edition of the wedding-feast in Cana, or of Camacho,3 corrected and enlarged. While we were enjoying the meal, which was directed by a cook from 'La Campana,' an orchestra played harmonious melodies. The beautiful young lady of the house, in a mestiza [223]gown4 and a cascade of diamonds, was as ever the queen of the feast.. All of us deplored from the bottom of our hearts a light sprain in her shapely foot that deprived her of the pleasures of the dance, for if we have to judge by her other conspicuous perfections, the young lady must dance like a sylph.
"The alcalde of the province arrived this afternoon for the purpose of honoring with his presence the ceremony of tomorrow. He has expressed regret over the poor health of the distinguished landlord, Señor Ibarra, who in God's mercy is now, according to report, somewhat recovered.

"Tonight there was a solemn procession, but of that I will speak in my letter tomorrow, because in addition to the explosions that have bewildered me and made me somewhat deaf I am tired and falling over with sleep. While, therefore, I recover my strength in the arms of Morpheus—or rather on a cot in the convento—I desire for you, my distinguished friend, a pleasant night and take leave of you until tomorrow, which will be the great day.

Your affectionate friend,

SAN DIEGO, November 11.

THE CORRESPONDENT."

Thus wrote the worthy correspondent. Now let us see what Capitan Martin wrote to his friend, Luis Chiquito:

“DEAR CHOY,—Come a-running if you can, for there’s something doing at the fiesta. Just imagine, Capitan Joaquin is almost broke. Capitan Tiago has doubled up on him three times and won at the first turn of the cards each time, so that Capitan Manuel, the owner of the house, is growing smaller every minute from sheer joy. Padre Damaso smashed a lamp with his fist because up to now he hasn’t won on a single card. The Consul has lost on his cocks and in the bank all [224]that he won from us at the fiesta of Biñan and at that of the Virgin of the Pillar in Santa Cruz.

“We expected Capitan Tiago to bring us his future son-in-law, the rich heir of Don Rafael, but it seems that he wishes to imitate his father, for he does not even show himself. It’s a pity, for it seems he never will be any use to us.

“Carlos the Chinaman is making a big fortune with the *liam-pó*. I suspect that he carries something hidden, probably a charm, for he complains constantly of headaches and keeps his head bandaged, and when the wheel of the *liam-pó* is slowing down he leans over, almost touching it, as if he were looking at it closely. I am shocked, because I know more stories of the same kind.

“Good-by, Choy. My birds are well and my wife is happy and having a good time.

Your friend,

MARTIN ARISTORENAS.”

Ibarra had received a perfumed note which Andeng, Maria Clara’s foster-sister, delivered to him on the evening of the first day of the fiesta. This note said:

“CRISOSTOMO,—It has been over a day since you have shown yourself. I have heard that you are ill and have prayed for you and lighted two candles, although papa says that you are not seriously ill. Last night and today I’ve been bored by requests to play on the piano and by invitations to dance. I didn’t know before that there are so many tiresome people in the world! If it were not for Padre Damaso, who tries to entertain me by talking to me and telling me many things, I would have shut myself up in my room and gone to sleep. Write me what the matter is with you and I’ll tell papa to visit you. For the present I send Andeng to make you some tea, as she knows how to prepare it well, probably better than your servants do.

MARIA CLARA.”

“P.S. If you don’t come tomorrow, I won’t go to the ceremony. *Vale!*”

[225]

1Every one talks of the fiesta according to the way he fared at it.

2A Spanish prelate, notable for his determined opposition in the Constituent Cortes of 1869 to the clause in the new Constitution providing for religious liberty.—TR.

3“Camacho’s wedding” is an episode in *Don Quixote*, wherein a wealthy man named Camacho is cheated out of his bride after he has prepared a magnificent wedding-feast.—TR.

4The full dress of the Filipino women, consisting of the *camisa, pañuelo*, and *saya suelta*, the latter a heavy skirt with a long train. The name *mestiza* is not inappropriate, as well from its composition as

its use, since the first two are distinctly native, antedating the conquest, while the *saya suelta* was no doubt introduced by the Spaniards.

[Contents]

Chapter XXIX
The Morning

At the first flush of dawn bands of music awoke the tired people of the town with lively airs. Life and movement reawakened, the bells began to chime, and the explosions commenced. It was the last day of the fiesta, in fact the fiesta proper. Much was hoped for, even more than on the previous day. The Brethren of the Venerable Tertiary Order were more numerous than those of the Holy Rosary, so they smiled piously, secure that they would humiliate their rivals. They had purchased a greater number of tapers, wherefor the Chinese dealers had reaped a harvest and in gratitude were thinking of being baptized, although some remarked that this was not so much on account of their faith in Catholicism as from a desire to get a wife. To this the pious women answered, "Even so, the marriage of so many Chinamen at once would be little short of a miracle and their wives would convert them."

The people arrayed themselves in their best clothes and dragged out from their strong-boxes all their jewelry. The sharpers and gamblers all shone in embroidered camisas with large diamond studs, heavy gold chains, and white straw hats. Only the old Sage went his way as usual in his dark-striped sinamay camisa buttoned up to the neck, loose shoes, and wide gray felt hat.

"You look sadder than ever!" the teniente-mayor accosted him. "Don't you want us to be happy now and then, since we have so much to weep over?"

"To be happy doesn't mean to act the fool," answered the old man. "It's the senseless orgy of every year! [226]And all for no end but to squander money, when there is so much misery and want. Yes, I understand it all, it's the same orgy, the revel to drown the woes of all."
"You know that I share your opinion, though," replied Don Filipo, half jestingly and half in earnest. "I have defended it, but what can one do against the gobernadorcillo and the curate?"

"Resign!" was the old man's curt answer as he moved away.

Don Filipo stood perplexed, staring after the old man. “Resign!” he muttered as he made his way toward the church. “Resign! Yes, if this office were an honor and not a burden, yes, I would resign.”

The paved court in front of the church was filled with people; men and women, young and old, dressed in their best clothes, all crowded together, came and went through the wide doors. There was a smell of powder, of flowers, of incense, and of perfumes, while bombs, rockets, and serpent-crackers made the women run and scream, the children laugh. One band played in front of the convento, another escorted the town officials, and still others marched about the streets, where floated and waved a multitude of banners. Variegated colors and lights distracted the sight, melodies and explosions the hearing, while the bells kept up a ceaseless chime. Moving all about were carriages whose horses at times became frightened, frisked and reared all of which, while not included in the program of the fiesta, formed a show in itself, free and by no means the least entertaining.

The *hermano mayor* for this day had sent servants to seek in the streets for whomsoever they might invite, as did he who gave the feast of which the Gospel tells us. Almost by force were urged invitations to partake of chocolate, coffee, tea, and sweetmeats, these invitations not seldom reaching the proportions of a demand.

There was to be celebrated the high mass, that known as the dalmatic, like the one of the day before, about which [227]the worthy correspondent wrote, only that now the officiating priest was to be Padre Salvi, and that the alcalde of the province, with many other Spaniards and persons of note, was to attend it in order to hear Padre Damaso, who enjoyed a great reputation in the province. Even the alferez, smarting under the preachments of Padre Salvi, would also attend in order to give evidence of his good-will and to recompense himself, if possible, for the bad spells the curate had caused him.
Such was the reputation of Padre Damaso that the correspondent wrote beforehand to the editor of his newspaper:

“As was announced in my badly executed account of yesterday, so it has come to pass. We have had the especial pleasure of listening to the Very Reverend Fray Damaso Verdolagas, former curate of this town, recently transferred to a larger parish in recognition of his meritorious services. The

illustrious and holy orator occupied the pulpit of the Holy Ghost and preached a most eloquent and profound sermon, which edified and left marveling all the faithful who had waited so anxiously to see spring from his fecund lips the restoring fountain of eternal life. Sublimity of conception, boldness of imagination, novelty of phraseology, gracefulness of style, naturalness of gestures, cleverness of speech, vigor of ideas—these are the traits of the Spanish Bossuet, who has justly earned such a high reputation not only among the enlightened Spaniards but even among the rude Indians and the cunning sons of the Celestial Empire."

But the confiding correspondent almost saw himself obliged to erase what he had written. Padre Damaso complained of a cold that he had contracted the night before, for after singing a few merry songs he had eaten three plates of ice-cream and attended the show for a short time. As a result of all this, he wished to renounce his part as the spokesman of God to men, but as no one else was to be found who was so well versed in the life and miracles of [228]San Diego,—the curate knew them, it is true, but it was his place to celebrate mass,—the other priests unanimously declared that the tone of Padre Damaso's voice could not be improved upon and that it would be a great pity for him to forego delivering such an eloquent sermon as he had written and memorized. Accordingly, his former housekeeper prepared for him lemonade, rubbed his chest and neck with liniment and olive-oil, massaged him, and wrapped him in warm cloths. He drank some raw eggs beaten up in wine and for the whole morning neither talked nor breakfasted, taking only a glass of milk and a cup of chocolate with a dozen or so of crackers, heroically renouncing his usual fried chicken and half of a Laguna cheese, because the housekeeper affirmed that cheese contained salt and grease, which would aggravate his cough.
"All for the sake of meriting heaven and of converting us!" exclaimed the Tertiary Sisters, much affected, upon being informed of these sacrifices.

"May Our Lady of Peace punish him!" muttered the Sisters of the Holy Rosary, unable to forgive him for leaning to the side of their rivals.

At half past eight the procession started from the shadow of the canvas canopy. It was the same as that of the previous day but for the introduction of one novelty: the older members of the Venerable Tertiary Order and some maidens dressed as old women displayed long gowns, the poor having

them of coarse cloth and the rich of silk, or rather of Franciscan *guingón*, as it is called, since it is most used by the reverend Franciscan friars. All these sacred garments were genuine, having come from the convento in Manila, where the people may obtain them as alms at a fixed price, if a commercial term may be permitted; this fixed price was liable to increase but not to reduction. In the convento itself and in the nunnery of St. Clara[1] are [229]sold these same garments which possess, besides the special merit of gaining many indulgences for those who may be shrouded in them, the very special merit of being dearer in proportion as they are old, threadbare, and unserviceable. We write this in case any pious reader need such sacred relics—or any cunning rag-picker of Europe wish to make a fortune by taking to the Philippines a consignment of patched and grimy garments, since they are valued at sixteen pesos or more, according to their more or less tattered appearance.

San Diego de Alcala was borne on a float adorned with plates of repoussé silver. The saint, though rather thin, had an ivory bust which gave him a severe and majestic mien, in spite of abundant kingly bangs like those of the Negrito. His mantle was of satin embroidered with gold.

Our venerable father, St. Francis, followed the Virgin as on yesterday, except that the priest under the canopy this time was Padre Salvi and not the graceful Padre Sibyla, so refined in manner. But if the former lacked a beautiful carriage he had more than enough unction, walking half bent over with lowered eyes and hands crossed in mystic attitude. The bearers of the canopy were the same cabezas de barangay, sweating with satisfaction at seeing themselves at the same time semi-sacristans, collectors of the tribute, redeemers of poor erring humanity, and consequently Christs who were giving their blood for the sins of others. The surpliced coadjutor went from float to float carrying the censer, with the smoke from which he from time to time regaled the nostrils of the curate, who then became even more serious and grave.

So the procession moved forward slowly and deliberately to the sound of bombs, songs, and religious melodies let loose into the air by bands of musicians that followed the floats. Meanwhile, the *hermano mayor* distributed candles [230]with such zeal that many of the participants returned to their homes with light enough for four nights of card-playing. Devoutly the curious spectators knelt at the passage of the float of the

Mother of God, reciting Credos and Salves fervently. In front of a house in whose gaily decorated windows were to be seen the alcalde, Capitan Tiago, Maria Clara, and Ibarra, with various Spaniards and young ladies, the float was detained. Padre Salvi happened to raise his eyes, but made not the slightest movement that might have been taken for a salute or a recognition of them. He merely stood erect, so that his cope fell over his shoulders more gracefully and elegantly.

In the street under the window was a young woman of pleasing countenance, dressed in deep mourning, carrying in her arms a young baby. She must have been a nursemaid only, for the child was white and ruddy while she was brown and had hair blacker than jet. Upon seeing the curate the tender infant held out its arms, laughed with the laugh that neither causes nor is caused by sorrow, and cried out stammeringly in the midst of a brief silence, "Pa-pa! Papa! Papa!" The young woman shuddered, slapped her hand hurriedly over the baby's mouth and ran away in dismay, with the baby crying.

Malicious ones winked at each other, and the Spaniards who had witnessed the short scene smiled, while the natural pallor of Padre Salvi changed to the hue of poppies. Yet the people were wrong, for the curate was not acquainted with the woman at all, she being a stranger in the town.[231]

1The nunnery of St. Clara, situated on the Pasig River just east of Fort Santiago, was founded in 1621 by the Poor Clares, an order of nuns affiliated with the Franciscans, and was taken under the royal [229n]patronage as the "Real Monasterio de Santa Clara" in 1662. It is still in existence and is perhaps the most curious of all the curious relics of the Middle Ages in old Manila.—TR.

[Contents]

Chapter XXX
In the Church

From end to end the huge barn that men dedicate as a home to the Creator of all existing things was filled with people. Pushing, crowding, and crushing one another, the few who were leaving and the many who were entering filled the air with exclamations of distress. Even from afar an arm would be stretched out to dip the fingers in the holy water, but at the critical moment the surging crowd would force the hand away. Then would be heard a complaint, a trampled woman would upbraid some one, but the pushing would continue. Some old people might succeed in dipping their fingers in the water, now the color of slime, where the population of a whole town, with transients besides, had washed. With it they would anoint themselves devoutly, although with difficulty, on the neck, on the crown of the head, on the forehead, on the chin, on the chest, and on the abdomen, in the assurance that thus they were sanctifying those parts and that they would suffer neither stiff neck, headache, consumption, nor indigestion. The young people, whether they were not so ailing or did not believe in that holy prophylactic, hardly more than moistened the tip of a finger—and this only in order that the devout might have no cause to talk—and pretended to make the sign of the cross on their foreheads, of course without touching them. "It may be blessed and everything you may wish," some young woman doubtless thought, "but it has such a color!"

It was difficult to breathe in the heat amid the smells of the human animal, but the preacher was worth all these inconveniences, as the sermon was costing the town two hundred [232]and fifty pesos. Old Tasio had said: "Two hundred and fifty pesos for a sermon! One man on one occasion! Only a third of what comedians cost, who will work for three nights! Surely you must be very rich!"

"What has that to do with the drama?" testily inquired the nervous leader of the Tertiary Brethren. "With the drama souls go to hell but with the sermon to heaven! If he had asked a thousand, we would have paid him and should still owe him gratitude."

"After all, you're right," replied the Sage, "for the sermon is more amusing to me at least than the drama."

“But I am not amused even by the drama!” yelled the other furiously.

“I believe it, since you understand one about as well as you do the other!” And the impious old man moved away without paying any attention to the insults and the direful prophecies that the irritated leader offered concerning his future existence.

While they were waiting for the alcalde, the people sweated and yawned, agitating the air with fans, hats, and handkerchiefs. Children shouted and cried, which kept the sacristans busy putting them out of the sacred edifice. Such action brought to the dull and conscientious leader of the Brotherhood of the Holy Rosary this thought: “‘Suffer little children to come unto me,’ said Our Savior, it is true, but here must be understood, children who do not cry.”

An old woman in a *guingón* habit, Sister Puté, chid her granddaughter, a child of six years, who was kneeling at her side, “O lost one, give heed, for you’re going to hear a sermon like that of Good Friday!” Here the old lady gave her a pinch to awaken the piety of the child, who made a grimace, stuck out her nose, and wrinkled up her eyebrows.

Some men squatted on their heels and dozed beside the confessional. One old man nodding caused our old woman to believe that he was mumbling prayers, so, running her fingers rapidly over the beads of her rosary—as that was [233]the most reverent way of respecting the designs of Heaven—little by little she set herself to imitating hint.

Ibarra stood in one corner while Maria Clara knelt near the high altar in a space which the curate had had the courtesy to order the sacristans to clear for her. Capitan Tiago, in a frock coat, sat on one of the benches provided for the authorities, which caused the children who did not know him to take him for another gobernadorcillo and to be wary about getting near him.

At last the alcalde with his staff arrived, proceeding from the sacristy and taking their seats in magnificent chairs placed on strips of carpet. The alcalde wore a full-dress uniform and displayed the cordon of Carlos III, with four or five other decorations. The people did not recognize him.

“*Abá!*” exclaimed a rustic. “A civil-guard dressed as a comedian!”

“Fool!” rejoined a bystander, nudging him with his elbow. “It’s the Prince Villardo that we saw at the show last night!”

So the alcalde went up several degrees in the popular estimation by becoming an enchanted prince, a vanquisher of giants.

When the mass began, those who were seated arose and those who had been asleep were awakened by the ringing of the bells and the sonorous voices of the singers. Padre Salvi, in spite of his gravity, wore a look of deep satisfaction, since there were serving him as deacon and subdeacon none less than two Augustinians. Each one, as it came his turn, sang well, in a more or less nasal tone and with unintelligible articulation, except the officiating priest himself, whose voice trembled somewhat, even getting out of tune at times, to the great wonder of those who knew him. Still he moved about with precision and elegance while he recited the *Dominus vobiscum*unctuously, dropping his head a little to the side and gazing toward heaven. Seeing him receive the smoke from the incense one would[234]have said that Galen was right in averring the passage of smoke in the nasal canals to the head through a screen of ethmoids, since he straightened himself, threw his head back, and moved toward the middle of the altar with such pompousness and gravity that Capitan Tiago found him more majestic than the Chinese comedian of the night before, even though the latter had been dressed as an emperor, paint-bedaubed, with beribboned sword, stiff beard like a horse’s mane, and high-soled slippers. “Undoubtedly,” so his thoughts ran, “a single curate of ours has more majesty than all the emperors.”
At length came the expected moment, that of hearing Padre Damaso. The three priests seated themselves in their chairs in an edifying attitude, as the worthy correspondent would say, the alcalde and other persons of place and position following their example. The music ceased.

The sudden transition from noise to silence awoke our aged Sister Puté, who was already snoring under cover of the music. Like Segismundo,1 or like the cook in the story of the Sleeping Beauty, the first thing that she did upon awaking was to whack her granddaughter on the neck, as the child had also fallen asleep. The latter screamed, but soon consoled herself at the sight of a woman who was beating her breast with contrition and

enthusiasm. All tried to place themselves comfortably, those who had no benches squatting down on the floor or on their heels.

Padre Damaso passed through the congregation preceded by two sacristans and followed by another friar carrying a massive volume. He disappeared as he went up the winding staircase, but his round head soon reappeared, then his fat neck, followed immediately by his body. Coughing slightly, he looked about him with assurance. He noticed Ibarra and with a special wink gave to understand that he would not overlook that youth in [235]his prayers. Then he turned a look of satisfaction upon Padre Sibyla and another of disdain upon Padre Martin, the preacher of the previous day. This inspection concluded, he turned cautiously and said, "Attention, brother!" to his companion, who opened the massive volume.

But the sermon deserves a separate chapter. A young man who was then learning stenography and who idolizes great orators, took it down; thanks to this fact, we can here present a selection from the sacred oratory of those regions.[236]

1The principal character in Calderon de la Barca's *La Vida es Sueño*. There is also a Tagalog *corrido*, or metrical romance, with this title.—TR.

[Contents]

Chapter XXXI
The Sermon

Fray Damaso began slowly in a low voice: "'*Et spiritum bonum dedisti, qui doceret eos, et manna tuum non prohibuisti ab ore eorum, et aquam dedisti eis in siti*. And thou gavest thy good Spirit to teach them, and thy manna thou didst not withhold from their mouth, and thou gavest them water for their thirst!' Words which the Lord spoke through the mouth of Esdras, in the second book, the ninth chapter, and the twentieth verse."[1]

Padre Sibyla glanced in surprise at the preacher. Padre Manuel Martin turned pale and swallowed hard that was better than his! Whether Padre Damaso noticed this or whether he was still hoarse, the fact is that he coughed several times as he placed both hands on the rail of the pulpit. The Holy Ghost was above his head, freshly painted, clean and white, with rose-colored beak and feet. "Most honorable sir" (to the alcalde), "most holy priests, Christians, brethren in Jesus Christ!"

Here he made a solemn pause as again he swept his gaze over the congregation, with whose attention and concentration he seemed satisfied.

"The first part of the sermon is to be in Spanish and the other in Tagalog; *loquebantur omnes linguas*."

After the salutations and the pause he extended his right hand majestically toward the altar, at the same time fixing his gaze on the alcalde. He slowly crossed his arms without uttering a word, then suddenly passing from calmness to action, threw back his head and made a sign toward the main door, sawing the air with his open hand so forcibly that the sacristans interpreted the gesture as a command [237]and closed the doors. The alferez became uneasy, doubting whether he should go or stay, when the preacher began in a strong voice, full and sonorous; truly his old housekeeper was skilled in medicine.

"Radiant and resplendent is the altar, wide is the great door, the air is the vehicle of the holy and divine words that will spring from my mouth! Hear ye then with the ears of your souls and hearts that the words of the Lord may not fall on the stony soil where the birds of Hell may consume them, but that ye may grow and flourish as holy seed in the field of our venerable

and seraphic father,St. Francis! O ye great sinners, captives of the Moros of the soul that infest the sea of eternal life in the powerful craft of the flesh and the world, ye who are laden with the fetters of lust and avarice, and who toil in the galleys of the infernal Satan, look ye here with reverent repentance upon him who saved souls from the captivity of the devil, upon the intrepid Gideon, upon the valiant David, upon the triumphant Roland of Christianity, upon the celestial Civil Guard, more powerful than all the Civil Guards together, now existing or to exist!" (The alferez frowned.) "Yes, señor alferez, more valiant and powerful, he who with no other weapon than a wooden cross boldly vanquishes the eternal tulisan of the shades and all the hosts of Lucifer, and who would have exterminated them forever, were not the spirits immortal! This marvel of divine creation, this wonderful prodigy, is the blessed Diego of Alcala, who, if I may avail myself of a comparison, since comparisons aid in the comprehension of incomprehensible things, as another has said, I say then that this great saint is merely a private soldier, a steward in the powerful company which our seraphic father, St. Francis, sends from Heaven, and to which I have the honor to belong as a corporal or sergeant, by the grace of God!"

The "rude Indians," as the correspondent would say, caught nothing more from this paragraph than the words "Civil Guard," "tulisan," "San Diego," and "St. Francis," [238]so, observing the wry face of the alferez and the bellicose gestures of the preacher, they deduced that the latter was reprehending him for not running down the tulisanes. San Diego and St. Francis would be commissioned in this duty and justly so, as is proved by a picture existing in the convento at Manila, representing St. Francis, by means of his girdle only, holding back the Chinese invasion in the first years after the discovery. The devout were accordingly not a little rejoiced and thanked God for this aid, not doubting that once the tulisanes had disappeared, St. Francis would also destroy the Civil Guard. With redoubled attention, therefore, they listened to Padre Damaso, as he continued:

"Most honorable sir" Great affairs are great affairs even by the side of the small and the small are always small even by the side of the great. So History says, but since History hits the nail on the head only once in a hundred times, being a thing made by men, and men make mistakes—*errarle es hominum*,2 as Cicero said—he who opens his mouth makes

mistakes, as they say in my country then the result is that there are profound truths which History does not record. These truths, most honorable sir, the divine Spirit spoke with that supreme wisdom which human intelligence has not comprehended since the times of Seneca and Aristotle, those wise priests of antiquity, even to our sinful days, and these truths are that not always are small affairs small, but that they are great, not by the side of the little things, but by the side of the grandest of the earth and of the heavens and of the air and of the clouds and of the waters and of space and of life and of death!"

"Amen!" exclaimed the leader of the Tertiaries, crossing himself.

With this figure of rhetoric, which he had learned from a famous preacher in Manila, Padre Damaso wished to startle his audience, and in fact his holy ghost was so [239]fascinated with such great truths that it was necessary to kick him to remind him of his business.
"Patent to your eyes—" prompted the holy ghost below.

"Patent to your eyes is the conclusive and impressive proof of this eternal philosophical truth! Patent is that sun of virtue, and I say sun and not moon, for there is no great merit in the fact that the moon shines during the night, —in the land of the blind the one-eyed man is king; by night may shine a light, a tiny star,—so the greatest merit is to be able to shine even in the middle of the day, as the sun does; so shines our brother Diego even in the midst of the greatest saints! Here you have patent to your eyes, in your impious disbelief, the masterpiece of the Highest for the confusion of the great of the earth, yes, my brethren, patent, *patent* to all, PATENT!"

A man rose pale and trembling and hid himself in a confessional. He was a liquor dealer who had been dozing and dreaming that the carbineers were demanding the patent, or license, that he did not have. It may safely be affirmed that he did not come out from his hiding-place while the sermon lasted.

"Humble and lowly saint, thy wooden cross" (the one that the image held was of silver), "thy modest gown, honors the great Francis whose sons and imitators we are. We propagate thy holy race in the whole world, in the remote places, in the cities, in the towns, without distinction between black and white" (the alcalde held his breath), "suffering hardships and

martyrdoms, thy holy race of faith and religion militant" ("Ah!" breathed the alcalde) "which holds the world in balance and prevents it from falling into the depths of perdition."

His hearers, including even Capitan Tiago, yawned little by little. Maria Clara was not listening to the sermon, for she knew that Ibarra was near and was thinking about him while she fanned herself and gazed at an evangelical bull that had all the outlines of a small carabao.

[240]"All should know by heart the Holy Scriptures and the lives of the saints and then I should not have to preach to you, O sinners! You should know such important and necessary things as the Lord's Prayer, although many of you have forgotten it, living now as do the Protestants or heretics, who, like the Chinese, respect not the ministers of God. But the worse for you, O ye accursed, moving as you are toward damnation!"
"*Abá*, Pale Lamaso, what!"[3] muttered Carlos, the Chinese, looking angrily at the preacher, who continued to extemporize, emitting a series of apostrophes and imprecations.

"You will die in final unrepentance, O race of heretics! God punishes you even on this earth with jails and prisons! Women should flee from you, the rulers should hang all of you so that the seed of Satan be not multiplied in the vineyard of the Lord! Jesus Christ said: 'If you have an evil member that leads you to sin, cut it off, and cast it into the fire—'"

Having forgotten both his sermon and his rhetoric, Fray Damaso began to be nervous. Ibarra became uneasy and looked about for a quiet corner, but the church was crowded. Maria Clara neither heard nor saw anything as she was analyzing a picture, of the blessed souls in purgatory, souls in the shape of men and women dressed in hides, with miters, hoods, and cowls, all roasting in the fire and clutching St. Francis' girdle, which did not break even with such great weight. With that improvisation on the preacher's part, the holy-ghost friar lost the thread of the sermon and skipped over three long paragraphs, giving the wrong cue to the now laboriously-panting Fray Damaso.

"Who of you, O sinners, would lick the sores of a poor and ragged beggar? Who? Let him answer by raising his hand! None! That I knew, for only a saint like Diego de Alcala would do it. He licked all the sores, saying

to [241]an astonished brother, ‘Thus is this sick one cured!’ O Christian charity! O matchless example! O virtue of virtues! O inimitable pattern! O spotless talisman!” Here he continued a long series of exclamations, the while crossing his arms and raising and lowering them as though he wished to fly or to frighten the birds away.

“Before dying he spoke in Latin, without knowing Latin! Marvel, O sinners! You, in spite of what you study, for which blows are given to you, you do not speak Latin, and you will die without speaking it! To speak Latin is a gift of God and therefore the Church uses Latin! I, too, speak Latin! Was God going to deny this consolation to His beloved Diego? Could he die, could he be permitted to die, without speaking Latin? Impossible! God wouldn’t be just, He Wouldn’t be God! So he talked in Latin, and of that fact the writers of his time bear witness!”

He ended this exordium with the passage which had cost him the most toil and which he had plagiarized from a great writer, Sinibaldo de Mas. “Therefore, I salute thee, illustrious Diego, the glory of our Order! Thou art the pattern of virtue, meek with honor, humble with nobility, compliant with fortitude, temperate with ambition, hostile with loyalty, compassionate with pardon, holy with conscientiousness, full of faith with devotion, credulous with sincerity, chaste with love, reserved with secrecy; long-suffering with patience, brave with timidity, moderate with desire, bold with resolution, obedient with subjection., modest with pride, zealous with disinterestedness, skilful with capability, ceremonious with politeness, astute with sagacity, merciful with piety, secretive with modesty, revengeful with valor, poor on account of thy labors with true conformity, prodigal with economy, active with ease, economical with liberality, innocent with sagacity, reformer with consistency, indifferent with zeal for learning: God created thee to feel the raptures of Platonic love! Aid me in singing thy greatness and thy name higher than the stars [242]and clearer than the sun itself that circles about thy feet! Aid me, all of you, as you appeal to God for sufficient inspiration by reciting the Ave Maria!”

All fell upon their knees and raised a murmur like the humming of a thousand bees. The alcalde laboriously bent one knee and wagged his head in a disgusted manner, while the alferez looked pale and penitent.

“To the devil with the curate!” muttered one of two youths who had come from Manila.

“Keep still!” admonished his companion. “His woman might hear us.”

Meanwhile, Padre Damaso, instead of reciting the Ave Maria, was scolding his holy ghost for having skipped three of his best paragraphs; at the same time he consumed a couple of cakes and a glass of Malaga, secure of encountering therein greater inspiration than in all the holy ghosts, whether of wood in the form of a dove or of flesh in the shape of an inattentive friar.

Then he began the sermon in Tagalog. The devout old woman again gave her granddaughter a hearty slap. The child awoke ill-naturedly and asked, “Is it time to cry now?”

“Not yet, O lost one, but don’t go to sleep again!” answered the good grandmother.

Of the second part of the sermon—that in Tagalog—we have only a few rough notes, for Padre Damaso extemporized in this language, not because he knew it better, but because, holding the provincial Filipinos ignorant of rhetoric, he was not afraid of making blunders before them. With Spaniards the case was different; he had heard rules of oratory spoken of, and it was possible that among his hearers some one had been in college-halls, perhaps the alcalde, so he wrote out his sermons, corrected and polished them, and then memorized and rehearsed them for several days beforehand.

It is common knowledge that none of those present understood the drift of the sermon. They were so dull of [243]understanding and the preacher was so profound, as Sister Rufa said, that the audience waited in vain for an opportunity to weep, and the lost grandchild of the blessed old woman went to sleep again. Nevertheless, this part had greater consequences than the first, at least for certain hearers, as we shall see later.

He began with a “*Mana capatir con cristiano*,”[4] followed by an avalanche of untranslatable phrases. He talked of the soul, of Hell, of “*mahal na santo pintacasi*,”[5] of the Indian sinners and of the virtuous Franciscan Fathers.

“The devil!” exclaimed one of the two irreverent Manilans to his companion. “That’s all Greek to me. I’m going.” Seeing the doors closed, he went out through the sacristy, to the great scandal of the people and especially of the preacher, who turned pale and paused in the midst of his sentence. Some looked for a violent apostrophe, but Padre Damaso

contented himself with watching the delinquent, and then he went on with his sermon.

Then were let loose curses upon the age, against the lack of reverence, against the growing indifference to Religion. This matter seemed to be his forte, for he appeared to be inspired and expressed himself with force and clearness. He talked of the sinners who did not attend confession, who died in prisons without the sacraments, of families accursed, of proud and puffed-up little half-breeds, of young sages and little philosophers, of pettifoggers, of picayunish students, and so on. Well known is this habit that many have when they wish to ridicule their enemies; they apply to them belittling epithets because their brains do not appear to furnish them any other means, and thus they are happy.

Ibarra heard it all and understood the allusions. Preserving an outward calm, he turned his eyes to God and the authorities, but saw nothing more than the images of saints, and the alcalde was sleeping.

[244]Meanwhile, the preacher's enthusiasm was rising by degrees. He spoke of the times when every Filipino upon meeting a priest took off his hat, knelt on the ground, and kissed the priest's hand. "But now," he added, "you only take off your salakot or your felt hat, which you have placed on the side of your head in order not to ruffle your nicely combed hair! You content yourself with saying, 'good day, *among*,' and there are proud dabblers in a little Latin who, from having studied in Manila or in Europe, believe that they have the right to shake a priest's hand instead of kissing it. Ah, the day of judgment will quickly come, the world will end, as many saints have foretold; it will rain fire, stones, and ashes to chastise your pride!" The people were exhorted not to imitate such "savages" but to hate and shun them, since they were beyond the religious pale.

"Hear what the holy decrees say! When an Indian meets a curate in the street he should bow his head and offer his neck for his master to step upon. If the curate and the Indian are both on horseback, then the Indian should stop and take off his hat or salakot reverently; and finally, if the Indian is on horseback and the curate on foot, the Indian should alight and not mount again until the curate has told him to go on, or is far away. This is what the holy decrees say and he who does not obey will be excommunicated."

“And when one is riding a carabao?” asked a scrupulous countryman of his neighbor.

“Then—keep on going!” answered the latter, who was a casuist.

But in spite of the cries and gestures of the preacher many fell asleep or wandered in their attention, since these sermons were ever the same. In vain some devout women tried to sigh and sob over the sins of the wicked; they had to desist in the attempt from lack of supporters. Even Sister Puté was thinking of something quite different. A man beside her had dropped off to sleep in such a way that[245]he had fallen over and crushed her habit, so the good woman caught up one of her clogs and with blows began to wake him, crying out, “Get away, savage, brute, devil, carabao, cur, accursed!”
Naturally, this caused somewhat of a stir. The preacher paused and arched his eyebrows, surprised at so great a scandal. Indignation choked the words in his throat and he was able only to bellow, while he pounded the pulpit with his fists. This had the desired effect, however, for the old woman, though still grumbling, dropped her clog and, crossing herself repeatedly, fell devoutly upon her knees.

“Aaah! Aaah!” the indignant priest was at last able to roar out as he crossed his arms and shook his head. “For this do I preach to you the whole morning, savages! Here in the house of God you quarrel and curse, shameless ones! Aaaah! You respect nothing! This is the result of the luxury and the looseness of the age! That’s just what I’ve told you, aah!”

Upon this theme he continued to preach for half an hour. The alcalde snored, and Maria Clara nodded, for the poor child could no longer keep from sleeping, since she had no more paintings or images to study, nor anything else to amuse her. On Ibarra the words and allusions made no more impression, for he was thinking of a cottage on the top of a mountain and saw Maria Clara in the garden; let men crawl about in their miserable towns in the depths of the valley!

Padre Salvi had caused the altar bell to be rung twice, but this was only adding fuel to the flame, for Padre Damaso became stubborn and prolonged the sermon. Fray Sibyla gnawed at his lips and repeatedly adjusted his gold-mounted eye-glasses. Fray Manuel Martin was the only one who appeared to listen with pleasure, for he was smiling.

But at last God said “Enough”; the orator became weary and descended from the pulpit. All knelt to render [246]thanks to God. The alcalde rubbed his eyes, stretched out one arm as if to waken himself, and yawned with a deep *aah*. The mass continued.

When all were kneeling and the priests had lowered their heads while the *Incarnatus est* was being sung, a man murmured in Ibarra’s ear, “At the laying of the cornerstone, don’t move away from the curate, don’t go down into the trench, don’t go near the stone—your life depends upon it!”

Ibarra turned to see Elias, who, as soon as he had said this, disappeared in the crowd.[247]

1The Douay version.—TR.

2“Errare humanum est”: “To err is human.”

3To the Philippine Chinese “d” and “l” look and sound about the same.—TR.

4“Brothers in Christ.”

5“Venerable patron saint.”

[Contents]

Chapter XXXII
The Derrick

The yellowish individual had kept his word, for it was no simple derrick that he had erected above the open trench to let the heavy block of granite down into its place. It was not the simple tripod that Ñor Juan had wanted for suspending a pulley from its top, but was much more, being at once a machine and an ornament, a grand and imposing ornament. Over eight meters in height rose the confused and complicated scaffolding. Four thick posts sunk in the ground served as a frame, fastened to each other by huge timbers crossing diagonally and joined by large nails driven in only half-way, perhaps for the reason that the apparatus was simply for temporary use and thus might easily be taken down again. Huge cables stretched from all sides gave an appearance of solidity and grandeur to the whole. At the top it was crowned with many-colored banners, streaming pennants, and enormous garlands of flowers and leaves artistically interwoven.

There at the top in the shadow made by the posts, the garlands, and the banners, hung fastened with cords and iron hooks an unusually large three-wheeled pulley over the polished sides of which passed in a crotch three cables even larger than the others. These held suspended the smooth, massive stone hollowed out in the center to form with a similar hole in the lower stone, already in place, the little space intended to contain the records of contemporaneous history, such as newspapers, manuscripts, money, medals, and the like, and perhaps to transmit them to very remote generations. The cables extended downward and connected with another equally large pulley at the bottom [248]of the apparatus, whence they passed to the drum of a windlass held in place by means of heavy timbers. This windlass, which could be turned with two cranks, increased the strength of a man a hundredfold by the movement of notched wheels, although it is true that what was gained in force was lost in velocity.

“Look,” said the yellowish individual, turning the crank, “look, Ñor Juan, how with merely my own strength I can raise and lower the great stone. It’s so well arranged that at will I can regulate the rise or fall inch by inch, so that a man in the trench can easily fit the stones together while I manage it from here.”

Ñor Juan could not but gaze in admiration at the speaker, who was smiling in his peculiar way. Curious bystanders made remarks praising the yellowish individual.

“Who taught you mechanics?” asked Ñor Juan.

“My father, my dead father,” was the answer, accompanied by his peculiar smile.

“Who taught your father?”

“Don Saturnino, the grandfather of Don Crisostomo.”

“I didn’t know that Don Saturnino—”

“Oh, he knew a lot of things! He not only beat his laborers well and exposed them out in the sun, but he also knew how to wake the sleepers and put the waking to sleep. You’ll see in time what my father taught me, you’ll see!”

Here the yellowish individual smiled again, but in a strange way.

On a tame covered with a piece of Persian tapestry rested a leaden cylinder containing the objects that were to be kept in the tomb-like receptacle and a glass case with thick sides, which would hold that mummy of an epoch and preserve for the future the records of a past.

Tasio, the Sage, who was walking about there thoughtfully, murmured: “Perchance some day when this edifice, which is today begun, has grown old and after many vicissitudes has fallen into ruins, either from the visitations of Nature or the destructive hand of man, and above [249]the ruins grow the ivy and the moss,—then when Time has destroyed the moss and ivy, and scattered the ashes of the ruins themselves to the winds, wiping from the pages of History the recollection of it and of those who destroyed it, long since lost from the memory of man: perchance when the races have been buried in their mantle of earth or have disappeared, only by accident the pick of some miner striking a spark from this rock will dig up mysteries and enigmas from the depths of the soil. Perchance the learned men of the nation that dwells in these regions will labor, as do the present Egyptologists, with the remains of a great civilization which occupied itself with eternity, little dreaming that upon it was descending so long a night.

Perchance some learned professor will say to his students of five or six years of age, in a language spoken by all mankind, 'Gentlemen, after studying and examining carefully the objects found in the depths of our soil, after deciphering some symbols and translating a few words, we can without the shadow of a doubt conclude that these objects belonged to the barbaric age of man, to that obscure era which we are accustomed to speak of as fabulous. In short, gentlemen, in order that you may form an approximate idea of the backwardness of our ancestors, it will be sufficient that I point out to you the fact that those who lived here not only recognized kings, but also for the purpose of settling questions of local government they had to go to the other side of the earth, just as if we should say that a body in order to move itself would need to consult a head existing in another part of the globe, perhaps in regions now sunk under the waves. This incredible defect, however improbable it may seem to us now, must have existed, if we take into consideration the circumstances surrounding those beings, whom I scarcely dare to call human! In those primitive times men were still (or at least so they believed) in direct communication with their Creator, since they had ministers from Him, beings different from the rest, designated always with the mysterious [250]letters "M. R. P.",[1] concerning the meaning of which our learned men do not agree. According to the professor of languages whom we have here, rather mediocre, since he does not speak more than a hundred of the imperfect languages of the past, "M. R. P." may signify "*Muy Rico Propietario*."[2] These ministers were a species of demigods, very virtuous and enlightened, and were very eloquent orators, who, in spite of their great power and prestige, never committed the slightest fault, which fact strengthens my belief in supposing that they were of a nature distinct from the rest. If this were not sufficient to sustain my belief, there yet remains the argument, disputed by no one and day by day confirmed, that these mysterious beings could make God descend to earth merely by saying a few words, that God could speak only through their mouths, that they ate His flesh and drank His blood, and even at times allowed the common folk to do the same.'"

These and other opinions the skeptical Sage put into the mouths of all the corrupt men of the future. Perhaps, as may easily be the case, old Tasio was mistaken, but we must return to our story.

In the kiosks which we saw two days ago occupied by the schoolmaster and his pupils, there was now spread out a toothsome and abundant meal. Noteworthy is the fact that on the table prepared for the school children there was not a single bottle of wine but an abundance of fruits. In the arbors joining the two kiosks were the seats for the musicians and a table covered with sweetmeats and confections, with bottles of water for the thirsty public, all decorated with leaves and flowers. The schoolmaster had erected near by a greased pole and hurdles, and had hung up pots and pans for a number of games.

[251]The crowd, resplendent in bright-colored garments, gathered as people fled from the burning sun, some into the shade of the trees, others under the arbor. The boys climbed up into the branches or on the stones in order to see the ceremony better, making up in this way for their short stature. They looked with envy at the clean and well-dressed school children, who occupied a place especially assigned to them and whose parents were overjoyed, as they, poor country folk, would see their children eat from a white tablecloth, almost the same as the curate or the alcalde. Thinking of this alone was enough to drive away hunger, and such an event would be recounted from father to son.

Soon were heard the distant strains of the band, which was preceded by a motley throng made up of persons of all ages, in clothing of all colors. The yellowish individual became uneasy and with a glance examined his whole apparatus. A curious countryman followed his glance and watched all his movements; this was Elias, who had also come to witness the ceremony, but in his salakot and rough attire he was almost unrecognizable. He had secured a very good position almost at the side of the windlass, on the edge of the excavation. With the music came the alcalde, the municipal officials, the friars, with the exception of Padre Damaso, and the Spanish employees. Ibarra was conversing with the alcalde, of whom he had made quite a friend since he had addressed to him some well-turned compliments over his decorations and ribbons, for aristocratic pretensions were the weakness of his Honor. Capitan Tiago, the alferez, and some other wealthy personages came in the gilded cluster of maidens displaying their silken parasols. Padre Salvi followed, silent and thoughtful as ever.

“Count upon my support always in any worthy enterprise,” the alcalde was saying to Ibarra. “I will give you whatever appropriation you need or else

see that it is furnished by others."

[252]As they drew nearer the youth felt his heart beat faster. Instinctively he glanced at the strange scaffolding raised there. He saw the yellowish individual salute him respectfully and gaze at him fixedly for a moment. With surprise he noticed Elias, who with a significant wink gave him to understand that he should remember the warning in the church.
The curate put on his sacerdotal robes and commenced the ceremony, while the one-eyed sacristan held the book and an acolyte the hyssop and jar of holy water. The rest stood about him uncovered, and maintained such a profound silence that, in spite of his reading in a low tone, it was apparent that Padre Salvi's voice was trembling.

Meanwhile, there had been placed in the glass case the manuscripts, newspapers, medals, coins, and the like, and the whole enclosed in the leaden cylinder, which was then hermetically sealed.

"Señor Ibarra, will you put the box in its place? The curate is waiting," murmured the alcalde into the young man's ear.

"I would with great pleasure," answered the latter, "but that would be usurping the honorable duty of the escribano. The escribano must make affidavit of the act."

So the escribano gravely took the box, descended the carpeted stairway leading to the bottom of the excavation and with due solemnity placed it in the hole in the stone. The curate then took the hyssop and sprinkled the stones with holy water.

Now the moment had arrived for each one to place his trowelful of mortar on the face of the large stone lying in the trench, in order that the other might be fitted and fastened to it. Ibarra handed the alcalde a mason's trowel, on the wide silver Made of which was engraved the date. But the alcalde first gave a harangue in Spanish:

"People of San Diego! We have the honor to preside over a ceremony whose importance you will not understand unless We tell you of it. A school is being founded, and [253]the school is the basis of society, the school is the book in which is written the future of the nations! Show us the schools of a people and We will show you what that people is.

“People of San Diego! Thank God, who has given you holy priests, and the government of the mother country, which untiringly spreads civilization through these fertile isles, protected beneath her glorious mantle! Thank God, who has taken pity on you and sent you these humble priests who enlighten you and teach you the divine word! Thank the government, which has made, is making, and will continue to make, so many sacrifices for you and your children!

“And now that the first stone of this important edifice is consecrated, We, alcalde-mayor of this province, in the name of his Majesty the King, whom God preserve, King of the Spains, in the name of the illustrious Spanish government and under the protection of its spotless and ever-victorious banner, We consecrate this act and begin the construction of this schoolhouse! People of San Diego, long live the King! Long live Spain! Long live the friars! Long live the Catholic Religion!”

Many voices were raised in answer, adding, “Long live the Señor Alcalde!”

He then majestically descended to the strains of the band, which began to play, deposited several trowelfuls of mortar on the stone, and with equal majesty reascended. The employees applauded.

Ibarra offered another trowel to the curate, who, after fixing his eyes on him for a moment, descended slowly. Half-way down the steps he raised his eyes to look at the stone, which hung fastened by the stout cables, but this was only for a second, and he then went on down. He did the same as the alcalde, but this time more applause was heard, for to the employees were added some friars and Capitan Tiago.

Padre Salvi then seemed to seek for some one to whom [254]he might give the trowel. He looked doubtfully at Maria Clara, but changing his mind, offered it to the escribano. The latter in gallantry offered it to Maria Clara, who smilingly refused it. The friars, the employees, and the alferez went down one after another, nor was Capitan Tiago forgotten. Ibarra only was left, and the order was about to be given for the yellowish individual to lower the stone when the curate remembered the youth and said to him in a joking tone, with affected familiarity:
“Aren’t you going to put on your trowelful, Señor Ibarra?”

“I should be a Juan Palomo, to prepare the meal and eat it myself,” answered the latter in the same tone.

“Go on!” said the alcalde, shoving him forward gently. “Otherwise, I’ll order that the stone be not lowered at all and we’ll be here until doomsday.”

Before such a terrible threat Ibarra had to obey. He exchanged the small silver trowel for a large iron one, an act which caused some of the spectators to smile, and went forward tranquilly. Elias gazed at him with such an indefinable expression that on seeing it one might have said that his whole life was concentrated in his eyes. The yellowish individual stared into the trench, which opened at his feet. After directing a rapid glance at the heavy stone hanging over his head and another at Elias and the yellowish individual, Ibarra said to Ñor Juan in a somewhat unsteady voice, “Give me the mortar and get me another trowel up there.”

The youth remained alone. Elias no longer looked at him, for his eyes were fastened on the hand of the yellowish individual, who, leaning over the trench, was anxiously following the movements of Ibarra. There was heard the noise of the trowel scraping on the stone in the midst of a feeble murmur among the employees, who were congratulating the alcalde on his speech.

Suddenly a crash was heard. The pulley tied at the base [255]of the derrick jumped up and after it the windlass, which struck the heavy posts like a battering-ram. The timbers shook, the fastenings flew apart, and the whole apparatus fell in a second with a frightful crash. A cloud of dust arose, while a cry of horror from a thousand voices filled the air. Nearly all fled; only a few dashed toward the trench. Maria Clara and Padre Salvi remained in their places, pale, motionless, and speechless.
When the dust had cleared away a little, they saw Ibarra standing among beams, posts, and cables, between the windlass and the heavy stone, which in its rapid descent had shaken and crushed everything. The youth still held the trowel in his hand and was staring with frightened eyes at the body of a man which lay at his feet half-buried among the timbers.

“You’re not killed! You’re still alive! For God’s sake, speak!” cried several employees, full of terror and solicitude.

“A miracle! A miracle!” shouted some.

“Come and extricate the body of this poor devil!” exclaimed Ibarra like one arousing himself from sleep.

On hearing his voice Maria Clara felt her strength leave her and fell half-fainting into the arms of her friends.

Great confusion prevailed. All were talking, gesticulating, running about, descending into the trench, coming up again, all amazed and terrified.

“Who is the dead man? Is he still alive?” asked the alferez.

The corpse was identified as that of the yellowish individual who had been operating the windlass.

“Arrest the foreman on the work!” was the first thing that the alcalde was able to say.

They examined the corpse, placing their hands on the chest, but the heart had ceased to beat. The blow had struck him on the head, and blood was flowing from his nose, mouth, and ears. On his neck were to be noticed some peculiar marks, four deep depressions toward the [256]back and one more somewhat larger on the other side, which induced the belief that a hand of steel had caught him as in a pair of pincers.
The priests felicitated the youth warmly and shook his hand. The Franciscan of humble aspect who had served as holy ghost for Padre Damaso exclaimed with tearful eyes, “God is just, God is good!”

“When I think that a few moments before I was down there!” said one of the employees to Ibarra. “What if I had happened to be the last!”

“It makes my hair stand on end!” remarked another partly bald individual.

“I’m glad that it happened to you and not to me,” murmured an old man tremblingly.

“Don Pascual!” exclaimed some of the Spaniards.

“I say that because the young man is not dead. If I had not been crushed, I should have died afterwards merely from thinking about it.”

But Ibarra was already at a distance informing himself as to Maria Clara’s condition.

“Don’t let this stop the fiesta, Señor Ibarra,” said the alcalde. “Praise God, the dead man is neither a priest nor a Spaniard! We must rejoice over your escape! Think if the stone had caught you!”

“There are presentiments, there are presentiments!” exclaimed the escribano. “I’ve said so before! Señor Ibarra didn’t go down willingly. I saw it!”

“The dead man is only an Indian!”

“Let the fiesta go on! Music! Sadness will never resuscitate the dead!”

“An investigation shall be made right here!”

“Send for the directorcillo!”

“Arrest the foreman on the work! To the stocks with him!”

“To the stocks! Music! To the stocks with the foreman!”

“Señor Alcalde,” said Ibarra gravely, “if mourning [257]will not resuscitate the dead, much less will arresting this man about whose guilt we know nothing. I will be security for his person and so I ask his liberty for these days at least.”
“Very well! But don’t let him do it again!”

All kinds of rumors began to circulate. The idea of a miracle was soon an accepted fact, although Fray Salvi seemed to rejoice but little over a miracle attributed to a saint of his Order and in his parish. There were not lacking those who added that they had seen descending into the trench, when everything was tumbling down, a figure in a dark robe like that of the Franciscans. There was no doubt about it; it was San Diego himself! It was also noted that Ibarra had attended mass and that the yellowish individual had not—it was all as clear as the sun!

“You see! You didn’t want to go to mass!” said a mother to her son. “If I hadn’t whipped you to make you go you would now be on your way to the town hall, like him, in a cart!”

The yellowish individual, or rather his corpse, wrapped up in a mat, was in fact being carried to the town hall. Ibarra hurried home to change his clothes.

“A bad beginning, huh!” commented old Tasio, as he moved away.[258]

1*Muy Reverendo Padre*: Very Reverend Father.

2Very rich landlord. The United States Philippine Commission, constituting the government of the Archipelago, paid to the religious orders “a lump sum of $7,239,000, more or less,” for the bulk of the lands claimed by them. See the *Annual Report of the Philippine Commission to the Secretary of War*, December 23, 1903.—TR.

[Contents]

Chapter XXXIII
Free Thought

Ibarra was just putting the finishing touches to a change of clothing when a servant informed him that a countryman was asking for him. Supposing it to be one of his laborers, he ordered that he be brought into his office, or study, which was at the same time a library and a chemical laboratory. Greatly to his surprise he found himself face to face with the severe and mysterious figure of Elias.

“You saved my life,” said the pilot in Tagalog, noticing Ibarra’s start of surprise. “I have partly paid the debt and you have nothing to thank me for, but quite the opposite. I’ve come to ask a favor of you.”

“Speak!” answered the youth in the same language, puzzled by the pilot’s gravity.

Elias stared into Ibarra’s eyes for some seconds before he replied, “When human courts try to clear up this mystery, I beg of you not to speak to any one of the warning that I gave you in the church.”

“Don’t worry,” answered the youth in a rather disgusted tone. “I know that you’re wanted, but I’m no informer.”

“Oh, it’s not on my account, not on my account!” exclaimed Elias with some vigor and haughtiness. “It’s on your own account. I fear nothing from men.”

Ibarra’s surprise increased. The tone in which this rustics—formerly a pilot—spoke was new and did not seem to harmonize with either his condition or his fortune. “What do you mean?” he asked, interrogating that mysterious individual with his looks.

[259]“I do not talk in enigmas but try to express myself clearly; for your greater security, it is better that your enemies think you unsuspecting and unprepared.”
Ibarra recoiled. “My enemies? Have I enemies?”

“All of us have them, sir, from the smallest insect up to man, from the poorest and humblest to the richest and most powerful! Enmity is the law of

life!”

Ibarra gazed at him in silence for a while, then murmured, “You are neither a pilot nor a rustic!”

“You have enemies in high and low places,” continued Elias, without heeding the young man’s words. “You are planning a great undertaking, you have a past. Your father and your grandfather had enemies because they had passions, and in life it is not the criminal who provokes the most hate but the honest man.”

“Do you know who my enemies are?”

Elias meditated for a moment. “I knew one—him who is dead,” he finally answered. “Last night I learned that a plot against you was being hatched, from some words exchanged with an unknown person who lost himself in the crowd. ‘The fish will not eat him, as they did his father; you’ll see tomorrow,’ the unknown said. These words caught my attention not only by their meaning but also on account of the person who uttered them, for he had some days before presented himself to the foreman on the work with the express request that he be allowed to superintend the placing of the stone. He didn’t ask for much pay but made a show of great knowledge. I hadn’t sufficient reason for believing in his bad intentions, but something within told me that my conjectures were true and therefore I chose as the suitable occasion to warn you a moment when you could not ask me any questions. The rest you have seen for yourself.”

For a long time after Elias had become silent Ibarra remained thoughtful, not answering him or saying a word. “I’m sorry that that man is dead!” he exclaimed at [260]length. “From him something more might have been learned.”
“If he had lived, he would have escaped from the trembling hand of blind human justice. God has judged him, God has killed him, let God be the only Judge!”

Crisostomo gazed for a moment at the man, who, while he spoke thus, exposed his muscular arms covered with lumps and bruises. “Do you also believe in the miracle?” he asked with a smile. “You know what a miracle the people are talking about.”

“Were I to believe in miracles, I should not believe in God. I should believe in a deified man, I should believe that man had really created a god in his own image and likeness,” the mysterious pilot answered solemnly. “But I believe in Him, I have felt His hand more than once. When the whole apparatus was falling down and threatening destruction to all who happened to be near it, I, I myself, caught the criminal, I placed myself at his side. He was struck and I am safe and sound.”

“You! So it was you—”

“Yes! I caught him when he tried to escape, once his deadly work had begun. I saw his crime, and I say this to you: let God be the sole judge among men, let Him be the only one to have the right over life, let no man ever think to take His place!”

“But you in this instance—”

“No!” interrupted Elias, guessing the objection. “It’s not the same. When a man condemns others to death or destroys their future forever he does it with impunity and uses the strength of others to execute his judgments, which after all may be mistaken or erroneous. But I, in exposing the criminal to the same peril that he had prepared for others, incurred the same risk as he did. I did not kill him, but let the hand of God smite him.”

“Then you don’t believe in accidents?”

“Believing in accidents is like believing in miracles; both presuppose that God does not know the future. What [261]is an accident? An event that no one has at all foreseen. What is a miracle? A contradiction, an overturning of natural laws. Lack of foresight and contradiction in the Intelligence that rules the machinery of the world indicate two great defects.”
“Who are you?” Ibarra again asked with some awe.

“Have you ever studied?”

“I have had to believe greatly in God, because I have lost faith in men,” answered the pilot, avoiding the question.

Ibarra thought he understood this hunted youth; he rejected human justice, he refused to recognize the right of man to judge his fellows, he protested against force and the superiority of some classes over others.

“But nevertheless you must admit the necessity of human justice, however imperfect it may be,” he answered. “God, in spite of the many ministers He may have on earth, cannot, or rather does not, pronounce His judgments clearly to settle the million conflicts that our passions excite. It is proper, it is necessary, it is just, that man sometimes judge his fellows.”

“Yes, to do good, but not to do ill, to correct and to better, but not to destroy, for if his judgments are wrong he hasn’t the power to remedy the evil he has done. But,” he added with a change of tone, “this discussion is beyond my powers and I’m detaining you, who are being waited for. Don’t forget what I’ve just told you—you have enemies. Take care of yourself for the good of our country.” Saying this, he turned to go.

“When shall I see you again?” asked Ibarra.

“Whenever you wish and always when I can be of service to you. I am still your debtor.”[262]
[Contents]

Chapter XXXIV
The Dinner

There in the decorated kiosk the great men of the province were dining. The alcalde occupied one end of the table and Ibarra the other. At the young man's right sat Maria Clara and at his left the escribano. Capitan Tiago, the alferez, the gobernadorcillo, the friars, the employees, and the few young ladies who had remained sat, not according to rank, but according to their inclinations. The meal was quite animated and happy.

When the dinner was half over, a messenger came in search of Capitan Tiago with a telegram, to open which he naturally requested the permission of the others, who very naturally begged him to do so. The worthy capitan at first knitted his eyebrows, then raised them; his face became pale, then lighted up as he hastily folded the paper and arose.

"Gentlemen," he announced in confusion, "his Excellency the Captain-General is coming this evening to honor my house." Thereupon he set off at a run, hatless, taking with him the message and his napkin.

He was followed by exclamations and questions, for a cry of "Tulisanes!" would not have produced greater effect. "But, listen!" "When is he coming?" "Tell us about it!" "His Excellency!" But Capitan Tiago was already far away.

"His Excellency is coming and will stay at Capitan Tiago's!" exclaimed some without taking into consideration the fact that his daughter and future son-in-law were present.

"The choice couldn't be better," answered the latter.

[263]The friars gazed at one another with looks that seemed to say: "The Captain-General is playing another one of his tricks, he is slighting us, for he ought to stay at the convento," but since this was the thought of all they remained silent, none of them giving expression to it.
"I was told of this yesterday," said the alcalde, "but at that time his Excellency had not yet fully decided."

“Do you know, Señor Alcalde, how long the Captain-General thinks of staying here?” asked the alferez uneasily.

“With certainty, no. His Excellency likes to give surprises.”

“Here come some more messages.” These were for the alcalde, the alferez, and the gobernadorcillo, and contained the same announcement. The friars noted well that none came directed to the curate.

“His Excellency will arrive at four this afternoon, gentlemen!” announced the alcalde solemnly. “So we can finish our meal in peace.” Leonidas at Thermopylae could not have said more cheerfully, “Tonight we shall sup with Pluto!”

The conversation again resumed its ordinary course.

“I note the absence of our great preacher,” timidly remarked an employee of inoffensive aspect who had not opened his mouth up to the time of eating, and who spoke now for the first time in the whole morning.

All who knew the history of Crisostomo’s father made a movement and winked, as if to say, “Get out! Fools rush in—” But some one more charitably disposed answered, “He must be rather tired.”

“Rather?” exclaimed the alferez. “He must be exhausted, and as they say here, all fagged out. What a sermon it was!”

“A splendid sermon—wonderful!” said the escribano.

“Magnificent—profound!” added the correspondent.

“To be able to talk so much, it’s necessary to have the lungs that he has,” observed Padre Manuel Martin. The [264]Augustinian did not concede him anything more than lungs.
“And his fertility of expression!” added Padre Salvi.

“Do you know that Señor Ibarra has the best cook in the province?” remarked the alcalde, to cut short such talk.

“You may well say that, but his beautiful neighbor doesn’t wish to honor the table, for she is scarcely eating a bite,” observed one of the employees.

Maria Clara blushed. “I thank the gentleman, he troubles himself too much on my account,” she stammered timidly, “but—”

“But you honor it enough merely by being present,” concluded the gallant alcalde as he turned to Padre Salvi.

“Padre,” he said in a loud voice, “I’ve observed that during the whole day your Reverence has been silent and thoughtful.”

“The alcalde is a great observer,” remarked Fray Sibyla in a meaning tone.

“It’s a habit of mine,” stammered the Franciscan. “It pleases me more to listen than to talk.”

“Your Reverence always takes care to win and not to lose,” said the alferez in a jesting tone.

Padre Salvi, however, did not take this as a joke, for his gaze brightened a moment as he replied, “The alferez knows very well these days that I’m not the one who is winning or losing most.”

The alferez turned the hit aside with a forced laugh, pretending not to take it to himself.

“But, gentlemen, I don’t understand how it is possible to talk of winnings and losses,” interposed the alcalde. “What will these amiable and discreet young ladies who honor us with their company think of us? For me the young women are like the *Æ*olian harps in the middle of the night—it is necessary to listen with close attention in order that their ineffable harmonies may elevate the soul to the celestial spheres of the infinite and the ideal!”

[265]“Your Honor is becoming poetical!” exclaimed the escribano gleefully, and both emptied their wine-glasses.
“I can’t help it,” said the alcalde as he wiped his lips. “Opportunity, while it doesn’t always make the thief, makes the poet. In my youth I composed verses which were really not bad.”

“So your Excellency has been unfaithful to the Muses to follow Themis,” emphatically declared our mythical or mythological correspondent.

“Pshaw, what would you have? To run through the entire social scale was always my dream. Yesterday I was gathering flowers and singing songs, today I wield the rod of justice and serve Humanity, tomorrow—”

“Tomorrow your Honor will throw the rod into the fire to warm yourself by it in the winter of life, and take an appointment in the cabinet,” added Padre Sibyla.

“Pshaw! Yes—no—to be a cabinet official isn’t exactly my beau-ideal: any upstart may become one. A villa in the North in which to spend the summer, a mansion in Madrid, and some property in Andalusia for the winter—there we shall live remembering our beloved Philippines. Of me Voltaire would not say, ‘We have lived among these people only to enrich ourselves and to calumniate them.’”

The alcalde quoted this in French, so the employees, thinking that his Honor had cracked a joke, began to laugh in appreciation of it. Some of the friars did likewise, since they did not know that the Voltaire mentioned was the same Voltaire whom they had so often cursed and consigned to hell. But Padre Sibyla was aware of it and became serious from the belief that the alcalde had said something heretical or impious.

In the other kiosk the children were eating under the direction of their teacher. For Filipino children they were rather noisy, since at the table and in the presence of other persons their sins are generally more of omission than of commission. Perhaps one who was using the tableware improperly [266]would be corrected by his neighbor and from this there would arise a noisy discussion in which each would have his partisans. Some would say the spoon, others the knife or the fork, and as no one was considered an authority there would arise the contention that God is Christ or, more clearly, a dispute of theologians. Their fathers and mothers winked, made signs, nudged one another, and showed their happiness by their smiles.

“Ya!” exclaimed a countrywoman to an old man who was mashing buyo in his *kalikut*, “in spite of the fact that my husband is opposed to it, my Andoy shall be a priest. It’s true that we’re poor, but we’ll work, and if necessary we’ll beg alms. There are not lacking those who will give money so that the poor may take holy orders. Does not Brother Mateo, a man who does not lie, say that Pope Sextus was a herder of carabaos in Batangas? Well then,

look at my Andoy, see if he hasn't already the face of a St. Vincent!" The good mother watered at the mouth to see her son take hold of a fork with both hands.

"God help us!" added the old man, rolling his quid of buyo. "If Andoy gets to be Pope we'll go to Rome he, he! I can still walk well, and if I die—he, he!"

"Don't worry, granddad! Andoy won't forget that you taught him how to weave baskets."

"You're right, Petra. I also believe that your son will be great, at least a patriarch. I have never seen any one who learned the business in a shorter time. Yes, he'll remember me when as Pope or bishop he entertains himself in making baskets for his cook. He'll then say masses for my soul—he, he!" With this hope the good old man again filled his *kalikut* with buyo.

"If God hears my prayers and my hopes are fulfilled, I'll say to Andoy, 'Son, take away all our sins and send us to Heaven!' Then we shan't need to pray and fast and buy indulgences. One whose son is a blessed Pope can commit sins!"

"Send him to my house tomorrow, Petra," cried the old [267]man enthusiastically, "and I'll teach him to weave the *nito!*"
"Huh! Get out! What are you dreaming about, grand-dad? Do you still think that the Popes even move their hands? The curate, being nothing more than a curate, only works in the mass—when he turns around! The Archbishop doesn't even turn around, for he says mass sitting down. So the Pope—the Pope says it in bed with a fan! What are you thinking about?"

"Of nothing more, Petra, than that he know how to weave the *nito*. It would be well for him to be able to sell hats and cigar-cases so that he wouldn't have to beg alms, as the curate does here every year in the name of the Pope. It always fills me with compassion to see a saint poor, so I give all my savings."

Another countryman here joined in the conversation, saying, "It's all settled, cumare,[1] my son has got to be a doctor, there's nothing like being a doctor!"

“Doctor! What are you talking about, cumpare?” retorted Petra. “There’s nothing like being a curate!”

“A curate, pish! A curate? The doctor makes lots of money, the sick people worship him, cumare!”

“Excuse me! The curate, by making three or four turns and saying *deminos pabiscum*,2 eats God and makes money. All, even the women, tell him their secrets.”

“And the doctor? What do you think a doctor is? The doctor sees all that the women have, he feels the pulses of the *dalagas!* I’d just like to be a doctor for a week!”

“And the curate, perhaps the curate doesn’t see what your doctor sees? Better still, you know the saying, ‘the fattest chicken and the roundest leg for the curate!’”

[268]“What of that? Do the doctors eat dried fish? Do they soil their fingers eating salt?”
“Does the curate dirty his hands as your doctors do? He has great estates and when he works he works with music and has sacristans to help him.”

“But the confessing, cumare? Isn’t that work?”

“No work about that! I’d just like to be confessing everybody! While we work and sweat to find out what our own neighbors are doing, the curate does nothing more than take a seat and they tell him everything. Sometimes he falls asleep, but he lets out two or three blessings and we are again the children of God! I’d just like to be a curate for one evening in Lent!”

“But the preaching? You can’t tell me that it’s not work. Just look how the fat curate was sweating this morning,” objected the rustic, who felt himself being beaten into retreat.

“Preaching! Work to preach! Where’s your judgment? I’d just like to be talking half a day from the pulpit, scolding and quarreling with everybody, without any one daring to reply, and be getting paid for it besides. I’d just like to be the curate for one morning when those who are in debt to me are attending mass! Look there now, how Padre Damaso gets fat with so much scolding and beating.”

Padre Damaso was, indeed, approaching with the gait of a heavy man. He was half smiling, but in such a malignant way that Ibarra, upon seeing him, lost the thread of his talk. The padre was greeted with some surprise but with signs of pleasure on the part of all except Ibarra. They were then at the dessert and the champagne was foaming in the glasses.

Padre Damaso's smile became nervous when he saw Maria Clara seated at Crisostomo's right. He took a seat beside the alcalde and said in the midst of a significant silence, "Were you discussing something, gentlemen? Go ahead!"

[269]"We were at the toasts," answered the alcalde. "Señor Ibarra was mentioning all who have helped him in his philanthropic enterprise and was speaking of the architect when your Reverence—"
"Well, I don't know anything about architecture," interrupted Padre Damaso, "but I laugh at architects and the fools who employ them. Here you have it—I drew the plan of this church and it's perfectly constructed, so an English jeweler who stopped in the convento one day assured me. To draw a plan one needs only to have two fingers' breadth of forehead."

"Nevertheless," answered the alcalde, seeing that Ibarra was silent, "when we consider certain buildings, as, for example, this schoolhouse, we need an expert."

"Get out with your experts!" exclaimed the priest with a sneer. "Only a fool needs experts! One must be more of a brute than the Indians, who build their own houses, not to know how to construct four walls and put a roof on top of them. That's all a schoolhouse is!"

The guests gazed at Ibarra, who had turned pale, but he continued as if in conversation with Maria Clara.

"But your Reverence should consider—"

"See now," went on the Franciscan, not allowing the alcalde to continue, "look how one of our lay brothers, the most stupid that we have, has constructed a hospital, good, pretty, and cheap. He made them work hard and paid only eight cuartos a day even to those who had to come from other towns. He knew how to handle them, not like a lot of cranks and little mestizos who are spoiling them by paying three or four reals."

“Does your Reverence say that he paid only eight cuartos? Impossible!” The alcalde was trying to change the course of the conversation.

“Yes, sir, and those who pride themselves on being good Spaniards ought to imitate him. You see now, since the Suez Canal was opened, the corruption that has come in here. Formerly, when we had to double the Cape, neither [270]so many vagabonds came here nor so many others went from here to become vagabonds.”
“But, Padre Damaso—”

“You know well enough what the Indian is—just as soon as he gets a little learning he sets himself up as a doctor! All these little fellows that go to Europe—”

“But, listen, your Reverence!” interrupted the alcalde, who was becoming nervous over the aggressiveness of such talk.

“Every one ends up as he deserves,” the friar continued. “The hand of God is manifest in the midst of it all, and one must be blind not to see it. Even in this life the fathers of such vipers receive their punishment, they die in jail ha, ha! As we might say, they have nowhere—”

But he did not finish the sentence. Ibarra, livid, had been following him with his gaze and upon hearing this allusion to his father jumped up and dropped a heavy hand on the priest’s head, so that he fell back stunned. The company was so filled with surprise and fright that no one made any movement to interfere.

“Keep off!” cried the youth in a terrible voice, as he caught up a sharp knife and placed his foot on the neck of the friar, who was recovering from the shock of his fall. “Let him who values his life keep away!”

The youth was beside himself. His whole body trembled and his eyes rolled threateningly in their sockets. Fray Damaso arose with an effort, but the youth caught him by the neck and shook him until he again fell doubled over on his knees.

“Señor Ibarra! Señor Ibarra!” stammered some. But no one, not even the alferez himself, dared to approach the gleaming knife, when they

considered the youth's strength and the condition of his mind. All seemed to be paralyzed.

"You, here! You have been silent, now it is my turn! I have tried to avoid this, but God brings me to it—let God be the judge!" The youth was breathing laboriously, [271]but with a hand of iron he held down the Franciscan, who was struggling vainly to free himself.
"My heart beats tranquilly, my hand is sure," he began, looking around him. "First, is there one among you, one who has not loved his father, who was born in such shame and humiliation that he hates his memory? You see? You understand this silence? Priest of a God of peace, with your mouth full of sanctity and religion and your heart full of evil, you cannot know what a father is, or you might have thought of your own! In all this crowd which you despise there is not one like you! You are condemned!"

The persons surrounding him, thinking that he was about to commit murder, made a movement.

"Away!" he cried again in a threatening voice. "What, do you fear that I shall stain my hands with impure blood? Have I not told you that my heart beats tranquilly? Away from us! Listen, priests and judges, you who think yourselves other men and attribute to yourselves other rights: my father was an honorable man,—ask these people here, who venerate his memory. My father was a good citizen and he sacrificed himself for me and for the good of his country. His house was open and his table was set for the stranger and the outcast who came to him in distress! He was a Christian who always did good and who never oppressed the unprotected or afflicted those in trouble. To this man here he opened his doors, he made him sit at his table and called him his friend. And how has this man repaid him? He calumniated him, persecuted him, raised up against him all the ignorant by availing himself of the sanctity of his position; he outraged his tomb, dishonored his memory, and persecuted him even in the sleep of death! Not satisfied with this, he persecutes the son now! I have fled from him, I have avoided his presence. You this morning heard him profane the pulpit, pointing me out to popular fanaticism, and I held my peace! Now he comes here to seek a quarrel with me. To your surprise, I have [272]suffered in silence, but he again insults the most sacred memory that there is for a son. You who are here, priests and judges, have you seen your aged father wear himself out

working for you, separating himself from you for your welfare, have you seen him die of sorrow in a prison sighing for your embrace, seeking some one to comfort him, alone, sick, when you were in a foreign land? Have you afterwards heard his name dishonored, have you found his tomb empty when you went to pray beside it? No? You are silent, you condemn him!"
He raised his hand, but with the swiftness of light a girlish form put itself between them and delicate fingers restrained the avenging arm. It was Maria Clara. Ibarra stared at her with a look that seemed to reflect madness. Slowly his clenched fingers relaxed, letting fall the body of the Franciscan and the knife. Covering his face, he fled through the crowd.[273]

1*Cumare* and *cumpare* are corruptions of the Spanish *comadre* and *compadre*, which have an origin analogous to the English "gossip" in its original meaning of "sponsor in baptism." In the Philippines these words are used among the simpler folk as familiar forms of address, "friend," "neighbor."—TR.

2Dominus vobiscum.

[Contents]

Chapter XXXV
Comments

News of the incident soon spread throughout the town. At first all were incredulous, but, having to yield to the fact, they broke out into exclamations of surprise. Each one, according to his moral lights, made his comments.

“Padre Damaso is dead,” said some. “When they picked him up his face was covered with blood and he wasn’t breathing.”

“May he rest in peace! But he hasn’t any more than settled his debts!” exclaimed a young man. “Look what he did this morning in the convento—there isn’t any name for it.”

“What did he do? Did he beat up the coadjutor again?”

“What did he do? Tell us about it!”

“You saw that Spanish mestizo go out through the sacristy in the midst of the sermon?”

“Yes, we saw him. Padre Damaso took note of him.”

“Well, after the sermon he sent for the young man and asked him why he had gone out. ‘I don’t understand Tagalog, Padre,’ was the reply. ‘And why did you joke about it, saying that it was Greek?’ yelled Padre Damaso, slapping the young man in the face. The latter retorted and the two came to blows until they were separated.”

“If that had happened to me—” hissed a student between his teeth.

“I don’t approve of the action of the Franciscan,” said another, “since Religion ought not to be imposed on any one as a punishment or a penance. But I am almost glad of it, for I know that young man, I know that he’s from [274]San Pedro Makati and that he talks Tagalog well. Now he wants to be taken for a recent arrival from Russia and prides himself on appearing not to know the language of his fathers.”
“Then God makes them and they rush together!”[1]

“Still we must protest against such actions,” exclaimed another student. “To remain silent would be to assent to the abuse, and what has happened may be repeated with any one of us. We’re going back to the times of Nero!”

“You’re wrong,” replied another. “Nero was a great artist, while Padre Damaso is only a tiresome preacher.”

The comments of the older persons were of a different kind. While they were waiting for the arrival of the Captain-General in a hut outside the town, the gobernadorcillo was saying, “To tell who was right and who was wrong, is not an easy matter. Yet if Señor Ibarra had used more prudence —”

“If Padre Damaso had used half the prudence of Señor Ibarra, you mean to say, perhaps!” interrupted Don Filipo. “The bad thing about it is that they exchanged parts—the youth conducted himself like an old man and the old man like a youth.”

“Did you say that no one moved, no one went near to separate them, except Capitan Tiago’s daughter?” asked Capitan Martin. “None of the friars, nor the alcalde? Ahem! Worse and worse! I shouldn’t like to be in that young man’s skin. No one will forgive him for having been afraid of him. Worse and worse, ahem!”

“Do you think so?” asked Capitan Basilio curiously.

“I hope,” said Don Filipo, exchanging a look with the latter, “that the people won’t desert him. We must keep in mind what his family has done and what he is trying to do now. And if, as may happen, the people, being intimidated, are silent, his friends—”

“But, gentlemen,” interrupted the gobernadorcillo, [275]“what can we do? What can the people do? Happen what will, the friars are always right!”
“They are *always* right because we *always* allow them to be,” answered Don Filipo impatiently, putting double stress on the italicized word. “Let us be right once and then we’ll talk.”

The gobernadorcillo scratched his head and stared at the roof while he replied in a sour tone, “Ay! the heat of the blood! You don’t seem to realize yet what country we’re in, you don’t know your countrymen. The friars are

rich and united, while we are divided and poor. Yes, try to defend yourself and you'll see how the people will leave you in the lurch."

"Yes!" exclaimed Don Filipo bitterly. "That will happen as long as you think that way, as long as fear and prudence are synonyms. More attention is paid to a possible evil than to a necessary good. At once fear, and not confidence, presents itself; each one thinks only of himself, no one thinks of the rest, and therefore we are all weak!"

"Well then, think of others before yourself and you'll see how they'll leave you in the lurch. Don't you know the proverb, 'Charity begins at home'?"

"You had better say," replied the exasperated teniente-mayor, "that cowardice begins in selfishness and ends in shame! This very day I'm going to hand in my resignation to the alcalde. I'm tired of passing for a joke without being useful to anybody. Good-by!"

The women had opinions of still another kind.

"Ay*!*" sighed one woman of kindly expression. "The young men are always so! If his good mother were alive, what would she say? When I think that the like may happen to my son, who has a violent temper, I almost envy his dead mother. I should die of grief!"

"Well, I shouldn't," replied another. "It wouldn't cause me any shame if such a thing should happen to my two sons."

[276]"What are you saying, Capitana Maria!" exclaimed the first, clasping her hands.
"It pleases me to see a son defend the memory of his parents, Capitana Tinay. What would you say if some day when you were a widow you heard your husband spoken ill of and your son Antonio should hang his head and remain silent?"

"I would deny him my blessing!" exclaimed a third, Sister Rufa, "but—"

"Deny him my blessing, never!" interrupted the kind Capitana Tinay. "A mother ought not to say that! But I don't know what I should do—I don't know—I believe I'd die—but I shouldn't want to see him again. But what do you think about it, Capitana Maria?"

“After all,” added Sister Rufa, “it must not be forgotten that it’s a great sin to place your hand on a sacred person.”

“A father’s memory is more sacred!” replied Capitana Maria. “No one, not even the Pope himself, much less Padre Damaso, may profane such a holy memory.”

“That’s true!” murmured Capitana Tinay, admiring the wisdom of both. “Where did you get such good ideas?”

“But the excommunication and the condemnation?” exclaimed Sister Rufa. “What are honor and a good name in this life if in the other we are damned? Everything passes away quickly—but the excommunication—to outrage a minister of Christ! No one less than the Pope can pardon that!”

“God, who commands honor for father and mother, will pardon it, God will not excommunicate him! And I tell you that if that young man comes to my house I will receive him and talk with him, and if I had a daughter I would want him for a son-in-law; he who is a good son will be a good husband and a good father—believe it, Sister Rufa!”

“Well, I don’t think so. Say what you like, and even [277]though you may appear to be right, I’ll always rather believe the curate. Before everything else, I’ll save my soul. What do you say, Capitana Tinny?”
“Oh, what do you want me to say? You’re both right the curate is right, but God must also be right. I don’t know, I’m only a foolish woman. What I’m going to do is to tell my son not to study any more, for they say that persons who know anything die on the gallows. *María Santísima*, my son wants to go to Europe!”

“What are you thinking of doing?”

“Tell him to stay with me—why should he know more? Tomorrow or the next day we shall die, the learned and the ignorant alike must die, and the only question is to live in peace.” The good old woman sighed and raised her eyes toward the sky.

“For my part,” said Capitana Maria gravely, “if I were rich like you I would let my sons travel; they are young and will some day be men. I have only a little while to live, we should see one another in the other life, so sons

should aspire to be more than their fathers, but at our sides we only teach them to be children."

"Ay, what rare thoughts you have!" exclaimed the astonished Capitana Tinay, clasping her hands. "It must be that you didn't suffer in bearing your twin boys."

"For the very reason that I did bear them with suffering, that I have nurtured and reared them in spite of our poverty, I do not wish that, after the trouble they're cost me, they be only half-men."

"It seems to me that you don't love your children as God commands," said Sister Rufa in a rather severe tone.

"Pardon me, every mother loves her sons in her own way. One mother loves them for her own sake and another loves them for their sake. I am one of the latter, for my husband has so taught me."

"All your ideas, Capitana Maria," said Sister Rufa, as if preaching, "are but little religious. Become a sister of [278]the Holy Rosary or ofSt. Francis or of St. Rita or of St. Clara."
"Sister Rufa, when I am a worthy sister of men then I'll try to be a sister of the saints," she answered with a smile.

To put an end to this chapter of comments and that the reader may learn in passing what the simple country folk thought of the incident, we will now go to the plaza, where under the large awning some rustics are conversing, one of them—he who dreamed about doctors of medicine—being an acquaintance of ours.

"What I regret most," said he, "is that the schoolhouse won't be finished."

"What's that?" asked the bystanders with interest.

"My son won't be a doctor but a carter, nothing more! Now there won't be any school!"

"Who says there won't be any school?" asked a rough and robust countryman with wide cheeks and a narrow head.

"I do! The white padres have called Don Crisostomo *plibastiero*.2 Now there won't be any school."

All stood looking questioningly at each other; that was a new term to them.

“And is that a bad name?” the rough countryman made bold to ask.

“The worst thing that one Christian can say to another!”

“Worse than *tarantado* and *sarayate?”*[3]

“If it were only that! I’ve been called those names several times and they didn’t even give me a bellyache.”

“Well, it can’t be worse than ‘*indio,*’ as the alferez says.”

The man who was to have a carter for a son became gloomier, while the other scratched his head in thought.

[279]“Then it must be like the *betelapora*[4] that the alferez’s old woman says. Worse than that is to spit on the Host.”
“Well, it’s worse than to spit on the Host on Good Friday,” was the grave reply. “You remember the word *ispichoso*[5] which when applied to a man is enough to have the civil-guards take him into exile or put him in jail well, *plibustiero* is much worse. According to what the telegrapher and the directorcillo said, *plibustiero*, said by a Christian, a curate, or a Spaniard to another Christian like us is a*santusdeus with requimiternam*,[6] for if they ever call you a *plibustiero* then you’d better get yourself shriven and pay your debts, since nothing remains for you but to be hanged. You know whether the telegrapher and the directorcillo ought to be informed; one talks with wires and the other knows Spanish and works only with a pen.” All were appalled.

“May they force me to wear shoes and in all my life to drink nothing but that vile stuff they call beer, if I ever let myself be called*pelbistero!*” swore the countryman, clenching his fists. “What, rich as Don Crisostomo is, knowing Spanish as he does, and able to eat fast with a knife and spoon, I’d laugh at five curates!”

“The next civil-guard I catch stealing my chickens I’m going to call *palabistiero*, then I’ll go to confession at once,” murmured one of the rustics in a low voice as he withdrew from the group.[280]

[1]The Spanish proverb equivalent to the English “Birds of a feather flock together.”—TR.

[2]For “filibustero.”

[3]*Tarantado* is a Spanish vulgarism meaning “blunderhead,” “bungler.” *Saragate* (or *zaragate*) is a Mexican provincialism meaning “disturber,” “mischief-maker.”—TR.

[4]*Vete á la porra* is a vulgarism almost the same in meaning and use as the English slang, “Tell it to the policeman,” *porra* being the Spanish term for the policeman’s “billy.”—TR.

[5]For *sospechoso*, “a suspicious character.”—TR.

[6]*Sanctus Deus* and *Requiem aeternam* (so called from their first words) are prayers for the dead.—TR.

[Contents]

Chapter XXXVI
The First Cloud

In Capitan Tiago's house reigned no less disorder than in the people's imagination. Maria Clara did nothing but weep and would not listen to the consoling words of her aunt and of Andeng, her foster-sister. Her father had forbidden her to speak to Ibarra until the priests should absolve him from the excommunication. Capitan Tiago himself, in the midst of his preparations for receiving the Captain-General properly, had been summoned to the convento.

"Don't cry, daughter," said Aunt Isabel, as she polished the bright plates of the mirrors with a piece of chamois. "They'll withdraw the excommunication, they'll write now to the Pope, and we'll make a big poor-offering. Padre Damaso only fainted, he's not dead."

"Don't cry," whispered Andeng. "I'll manage it so that you may talk with him. What are confessionals for if not that we may sin? Everything is forgiven by telling it to the curate."

At length Capitan Tiago returned. They sought in his face the answer to many questions, and it announced discouragement. The poor fellow was perspiring; he rubbed his hand across his forehead, but was unable to say a single word.

"What has happened, Santiago?" asked Aunt Isabel anxiously.

He answered by sighing and wiping away a tear.

"For God's sake, speak! What has happened?"

"Just what I feared," he broke out at last, half in tears. [281]"All is lost! Padre Damaso has ordered me to break the engagement, otherwise he will damn me in this life and in the next. All of them told me the same, even Padre Sibyla. I must close the doors of my house against him, and I owe him over fifty thousand pesos! I told the padres this, but they refused to take any notice of it. 'Which do you prefer to lose,' they asked me, 'fifty thousand pesos or your life and your soul?' Ay, St. Anthony, if I had only known, if I had only known! Don't cry, daughter," he went on, turning to

the sobbing girl. “You’re not like your mother, who never cried except just before you were born. Padre Damaso told me that a relative of his has just arrived from Spain and you are to marry him.”
Maria Clara covered her ears, while Aunt Isabel screamed, “Santiago, are you crazy? To talk to her of another sweetheart now! Do you think that your daughter changes sweethearts as she does her camisa?”

“That’s just the way I felt, Isabel. Don Crisostomo is rich, while the Spaniards marry only for love of money. But what do you want me to do? They’ve threatened me with another excommunication. They say that not only my soul but also my body is in great danger—my body, do you hear, my body!”

“But you’re only making your daughter more disconsolate! Isn’t the Archbishop your friend? Why don’t you write to him?”

“The Archbishop is also a friar, the Archbishop does only what the friars tell him to do. But, Maria, don’t cry. The Captain-General is coming, he’ll want to see you, and your eyes are all red. Ay, I was thinking to spend a happy evening! Without this misfortune I should be the happiest of men—every one would envy me! Be calm, my child, I’m more unfortunate than you and I’m not crying. You can have another and better husband, while I—I’ve lost fifty thousand pesos! Ay, Virgin of Antipolo, if tonight I may only have luck!”

Salvos, the sound of carriage wheels, the galloping of [282]horses, and a band playing the royal march, announced the arrival of his Excellency, the Captain-General of the Philippines. Maria Clara ran to hide herself in her chamber. Poor child, rough hands that knew not its delicate chords were playing with her heart! While the house became filled with people and heavy steps, commanding voices, and the clank of sabers and spurs resounded on all sides, the afflicted maiden reclined half-kneeling before a picture of the Virgin represented in that sorrowful loneliness perceived only by Delaroche, as if he had surprised her returning from the sepulcher of her Son. But Maria Clara was not thinking of that mother’s sorrow, she was thinking of her own. With her head hanging down over her breast and her hands resting on the floor she made the picture of a lily bent by the storm. A future dreamed of and cherished for years, whose illusions, born in infancy and grown strong throughout youth, had given form to the very fibers of her

being, to be wiped away now from her mind and heart by a single word! It was enough to stop the beating of one and to deprive the other of reason.
Maria Clara was a loving daughter as well as a good and pious Christian, so it was not the excommunication alone that terrified her, but the command and the ominous calmness of her father demanding the sacrifice of her love. Now she felt the whole force of that affection which until this moment she had hardly suspected. It had been like a river gliding along peacefully with its banks carpeted by fragrant flowers and its bed covered with fine sand, so that the wind hardly ruffled its current as it moved along, seeming hardly to flow at all; but suddenly its bed becomes narrower, sharp stones block the way, hoary logs fall across it forming a barrier—then the stream rises and roars with its waves boiling and scattering clouds of foam, it beats against the rocks and rushes into the abyss!

She wanted to pray, but who in despair can pray? Prayers are for the hours of hope, and when in the absence of this we turn to God it is only with complaints. "My [283]God," cried her heart, "why dost Thou thus cut a man off, why dost Thou deny him the love of others? Thou dost not deny him thy sunlight and thy air nor hide from him the sight of thy heaven! Why then deny him love, for without a sight of the sky, without air or sunlight, one can live, but without love—never!"
Would these cries unheard by men reach the throne of God or be heard by the Mother of the distressed? The poor maiden who had never known a mother dared to confide these sorrows of an earthly love to that pure heart that knew only the love of daughter and of mother. In her despair she turned to that deified image of womanhood, the most beautiful idealization of the most ideal of all creatures, to that poetical creation of Christianity who unites in herself the two most beautiful phases of womanhood without its sorrows: those of virgin and mother,—to her whom we call Mary!

"Mother, mother!" she moaned.

Aunt Isabel came to tear her away from her sorrow since she was being asked for by some friends and by the Captain-General, who wished to talk with her.

"Aunt, tell them that I'm ill," begged the frightened girl. "They're going to make me play on the piano and sing."

“Your father has promised. Are you going to put your father in a bad light?”

Maria Clara rose, looked at her aunt, and threw back her shapely arms, murmuring, “Oh, if I only had—”

But without concluding the phrase she began to make herself ready for presentation.[284]
[Contents]

Chapter XXXVII
His Excellency

“I Want to talk with that young man,” said his Excellency to an aide. “He has aroused all my interest.”

“They have already gone to look for him, General. But here is a young man from Manila who insists on being introduced. We told him that your Excellency had no time for interviews, that you had not come to give audiences, but to see the town and the procession, and he answered that your Excellency always has time to dispense justice—”

His Excellency turned to the alcalde in wonder. “If I am not mistaken,” said the latter with a slight bow, “he is the young man who this morning had a quarrel with Padre Damaso over the sermon.”

“Still another? Has this friar set himself to stir up the whole province or does he think that he governs here? Show the young man in.” His Excellency paced nervously from one end of the sala to the other.

In the hall were gathered various Spaniards mingled with soldiers and officials of San Diego and neighboring towns, standing in groups conversing or disputing. There were also to be seen all the friars, with the exception of Padre Damaso, and they wanted to go in to pay their respects to his Excellency.

“His Excellency the Captain-General begs your Reverences to wait a moment,” said the aide. “Come in, young man!” The Manilan who had confounded Greek with Tagalog entered the room pale and trembling.

All were filled with surprise; surely his Excellency must [285]be greatly irritated to dare to make the friars wait! Padre Sibyla remarked, “I haven’t anything to say to him, I’m wasting my time here.”
“I say the same,” added an Augustinian. “Shall we go?”

“Wouldn’t it be better that we find out how he stands?” asked Padre Salvi. “We should avoid a scandal, and should be able to remind him of his duties toward—religion.”

“Your Reverences may enter, if you so desire,” said the aide as he ushered out the youth who did not understand Greek and whose countenance was now beaming with satisfaction.

Fray Sibyla entered first, Padre Salvi, Padre Martin, and the other priests following. They all made respectful bows with the exception of Padre Sibyla, who even in bending preserved a certain air of superiority. Padre Salvi on the other hand almost doubled himself over the girdle.

“Which of your Reverences is Padre Damaso?” asked the Captain-General without any preliminary greeting, neither asking them to be seated nor inquiring about their health nor addressing them with the flattering speeches to which such important personages are accustomed.

“Padre Damaso is not here among us, sir,” replied Fray Sibyla in the same dry tone as that used by his Excellency.

“Your Excellency’s servant is in bed sick,” added Padre Salvi humbly. “After having the pleasure of welcoming you and of informing ourselves concerning your Excellency’s health, as is the duty of all good subjects of the King and of every person of culture, we have come in the name of the respected servant of your Excellency who has had the misfortune—”

“Oh!” interrupted the Captain-General, twirling a chair about on one leg and smiling nervously, “if all the servants of my Excellency were like his Reverence, Padre Damaso, I should prefer myself to serve my Excellency!”

[286]The reverend gentlemen, who were standing up physically, did so mentally at this interruption.
“Won’t your Reverences be seated?” he added after a brief pause, moderating his tone a little.

Capitan Tiago here appeared in full dress, walking on tiptoe and leading by the hand Maria Clara, who entered timidly and with hesitation. Still she bowed gracefully and ceremoniously.

“Is this young lady your daughter?” asked the Captain-General in surprise.

“And your Excellency’s, General,” answered Capitan Tiago seriously.1

The alcalde and the aides opened their eyes wide, but his Excellency lost none of his gravity as he took the girl's hand and said affably, "Happy are the fathers who have daughters like you, señorita! I have heard you spoken of with respect and admiration and have wanted to see you and thank you for your beautiful action of this afternoon. I am informed of *everything* and when I make my report to his Majesty's government I shall not forget your noble conduct. Meanwhile, permit me to thank you in the name of his Majesty, the King, whom I represent here and who loves *peace and tranquillity* in his loyal subjects, and for myself, a father who has daughters of your age, and to propose a reward for you."

"Sir—" answered the trembling Maria Clara.

His Excellency guessed what she wanted to say, and so continued: "It is well, señorita, that you are at peace with your conscience and content with the good opinion of your fellow-countrymen, with the faith which is its own best reward and beyond which we should not aspire. But you must not deprive me of an opportunity to show that if Justice knows how to punish she also knows how to reward[287]and that she is not always *blind!*" The italicized words were all spoken in a loud and significant tone.
"Señor Don Juan Crisostomo Ibarra awaits the orders of your Excellency!" announced the aide in a loud voice.

Maria Clara shuddered.

"Ah!" exclaimed the Captain-General. "Allow me, señorita, to express my desire to see you again before leaving the town, as I still have some very important things to say to you. Señor Alcalde, you will accompany me during the walk which I wish to take after the conference that I will hold alone with Señor Ibarra."

"Your Excellency will permit us to inform you," began Padre Salvi humbly, "that Señor Ibarra is excommunicated."

His Excellency cut short this speech, saying, "I am happy that I have only to regret the condition of Padre Damaso, for whom I*sincerely* desire a *complete* recovery, since at his age *a voyage to Spain* on account of his health may not be very agreeable. But that depends on him! Meanwhile, may God preserve the health of your Reverences!"

“And so much depends on him,” murmured Padre Salvi as they retired. “We’ll see who makes that voyage soonest!” remarked another Franciscan.

“I shall leave at once,” declared the indignant Padre Sibyla.

“And we shall go back to our province,” said the Augustinians. Neither the Dominican nor the Augustinians could endure the thought that they had been so coldly received on a Franciscan’s account.

In the hall they met Ibarra, their amphitryon of a few hours before, but no greetings were exchanged, only looks that said many things. But when the friars had withdrawn the alcalde greeted him familiarly, although the entrance of the aide looking for the young man left no time for conversation. In the doorway he met Maria Clara; their [288]looks also said many things but quite different from what the friars’ eyes had expressed.
Ibarra was dressed in deep mourning, but presented himself serenely and made a profound bow, even though the visit of the friars had not appeared to him to be a good augury. The Captain-General advanced toward him several steps.

“I take pleasure, Señor Ibarra, in shaking your hand. Permit me to receive you in all confidence.” His Excellency examined the youth with marked satisfaction.

“Sir, such kindness—”

“Your surprise offends me, signifying as it does that you had not expected to be well received. That is casting a doubt on my sense of justice!”

“A cordial reception, sir, for an insignificant subject of his Majesty like myself is not justice but a favor.”

“Good, good,” exclaimed his Excellency, seating himself and waving Ibarra to a chair. “Let us enjoy a brief period of frankness. I am very well satisfied with your conduct and have already recommended you to his Majesty for a decoration on account of your philanthropic idea of erecting a schoolhouse. If you had let me know, I would have attended the ceremony with pleasure, and perhaps might have prevented a disagreeable incident.”

“It seemed to me such a small matter,” answered the youth, “that I did not think it worth while troubling your Excellency with it in the midst of your

numerous cares. Besides, my duty was to apply first to the chief authority of my province."

His Excellency nodded with a satisfied air and went on in an even more familiar tone: "In regard to the trouble you're had with Padre Damaso, don't hold any fear or rancor, for they won't touch a hair of your head while I govern the islands. As for the excommunication, I'll speak to the Archbishop, since it is necessary for us to adjust ourselves to circumstances. Here we can't laugh at such things in public as we can in the Peninsula and in enlightened [289]Europe. Nevertheless, be more prudent in the future. You have placed yourself in opposition to the religious orders, who must be respected on account of their influence and their wealth. But I will protect you, for I like good sons, I like to see them honor the memory of their fathers. I loved mine, and, as God lives, I don't know what I would have done in your place!"
Then, changing the subject of conversation quickly, he asked, "I'm told that you have just returned from Europe; were you in Madrid?"

"Yes, sir, several months."

"Perhaps you heard my family spoken of?"

"Your Excellency had just left when I had the honor of being introduced to your family."

"How is it, then, that you came without bringing any recommendations to me?"

"Sir," replied Ibarra with a bow, "because I did not come direct from Spain and because I have heard your Excellency so well spoken of that I thought a letter of recommendation might not only be valueless but even offensive; all Filipinos are recommended to you."

A smile played about the old soldier's lips and he replied slowly, as though measuring and weighing his words, "You flatter me by thinking so, and—so it ought to be. Nevertheless, young man, you must know what burdens weigh upon our shoulders here in the Philippines. Here we, old soldiers, have to do and to be everything: King, Minister of State, of War, of Justice, of Finance, of Agriculture, and of all the rest. The worst part of it too is that in every matter we have to consult the distant mother country, which

accepts or rejects our proposals according to circumstances there—and at times blindly. As we Spaniards say, 'He who attempts many things succeeds in none.' Besides, we generally come here knowing little about the country and leave it when we begin to get acquainted with it. With you I can be frank, for it would be useless to try to be otherwise. Even in Spain, where [290]each department has its own minister, born and reared in the locality, where there are a press and a public opinion, where the opposition frankly opens the eyes of the government and keeps it informed, everything moves along imperfectly and defectively; thus it is a miracle that here things are not completely topsyturvy in the lack of these safeguards, and having to live and work under the shadow of a most powerful opposition. Good intentions are not lacking to us, the governing powers, but we find ourselves obliged to avail ourselves of the eyes and arms of others whom ordinarily we do not know and who perhaps, instead of serving their country, serve only their own private interests. This is not our fault but the fault of circumstances—the friars aid us not a little in getting along, but they are not sufficient. You have aroused my interest and it is my desire that the imperfections of our present system of government be of no hindrance to you. I cannot look after everybody nor can everybody come to me. Can I be of service to you in any way? Have you no request to make?"
Ibarra reflected a moment before he answered. "Sir, my dearest wish is the happiness of my country, a happiness which I desire to see owed to the mother country and to the efforts of my fellow-citizens, the two united by the eternal bonds of common aspirations and common interests. What I would request can only be given by the government after years of unceasing toil and after the introduction of definite reforms."

His Excellency gazed at him for a few seconds with a searching look, which Ibarra sustained with naturalness. "You are the first man that I've talked to in this country!" he finally exclaimed, extending his hand.

"Your Excellency has seen only those who drag themselves about in the city; you have not visited the slandered huts of our towns or your Excellency would have been able to see real men, if to be a man it is sufficient to have a generous heart and simple customs."

[291]The Captain-General rose and began to walk back and forth in the room. "Señor Ibarra," he exclaimed, pausing suddenly, and the young man

also rose, “perhaps within a month I shall leave. Your education and your mode of thinking are not for this country. Sell what you have, pack your trunk, and come with me to Europe; the climate there will be more agreeable to you.”
“I shall always while I live preserve the memory of your Excellency’s kindness,” replied Ibarra with emotion, “but I must remain in this country where my fathers have lived.”

“Where they have died you might say with more exactness! Believe me, perhaps I know your country better than you yourself do. Ah, now I remember,” he exclaimed with a change of tone, “you are going to marry an adorable young woman and I’m detaining you here! Go, go to her, and that you may have greater freedom send her father to me,” this with a smile. “Don’t forget, though, that I want you to accompany me in my walk.”

Ibarra bowed and withdrew. His Excellency then called to his aide. “I’m satisfied,” he said, slapping the latter lightly on the shoulder. “Today I’ve seen for the first time how it is possible for one to be a good Spaniard without ceasing to be a good Filipino and to love his country. Today I showed their Reverences that we are not all puppets of theirs. This young man gave me the opportunity and I shall soon have settled all my accounts with the friars. It’s a pity that some day or other this young man—But call the alcalde.”

The alcalde presented himself immediately. As he entered, the Captain-General said to him, “Señor Alcalde, in order to avoid any repetition of *scenes* such as you *witnessed* this afternoon, scenes that I regret, as they *hurt the prestige* of the government and of all good Spaniards, allow me to recommend to your *especial* care Señor Ibarra, so that you may afford him means for carrying out his patriotic intentions and also that in the future you prevent his [292]being molested by persons of any class whatsoever, under any pretext at all.”
The alcalde understood the reprimand and bowed to conceal his confusion.

“Have the same order communicated to the alferez who commands in the district here. Also, investigate whether that gentleman has affairs of his own that are not sanctioned by the regulations. I’ve heard more than one complaint in regard to that.”

Capitan Tiago presented himself stiff and formal. “Don Santiago,” said his Excellency in an affable tone, “a little while ago I felicitated you on the happiness of having a daughter such as the Señorita de los Santos; now let me congratulate you on your future son-in-law. The most virtuous of daughters is certainly worthy of the best citizen of the Philippines. Is it permitted to know when the wedding will occur?”

“Sir!” stammered Capitan Tiago, wiping the perspiration from his forehead.

“Come now, I see that there is nothing definitely arranged. If persons are lacking to stand up with them, I shall take the greatest pleasure in being one of them. That’s for the purpose of ridding myself of the feeling of disgust which the many weddings I’ve heretofore taken part in have given me,” he added, turning to the alcalde.

“Yes, sir,” answered Capitan Tiago with a smile that would move to pity.

Ibarra almost ran in search of Maria Clara—he had so many things to tell her. Hearing merry voices in one of the rooms, he knocked lightly on the door.

“Who’s there?” asked the voice of Maria Clara.

“I!”

The voices became hushed and the door—did not open.

“It’s I, may I come in?” called the young man, his heart beating violently.

The silence continued. Then light footsteps approached the door and the merry voice of Sinang murmured through [293]the keyhole, “Crisostomo, we’re going to the theater tonight. Write what you have to say to Maria.”
The footsteps retreated again as rapidly as they approached.

“What does this mean?” murmured Ibarra thoughtfully as he retired slowly from the door.[294]

1Spanish etiquette requires that the possessor of an object immediately offer it to any person who asks about it with the conventional phrase, “It is yours.” Capitan Tiago is rather overdoing his Latin refinement.—TR.

[Contents]

Chapter XXXVIII
The Procession

At nightfall, when all the lanterns in the windows had been lighted, for the fourth time the procession started amid the ringing of bells and the usual explosions of bombs. The Captain-General, who had gone out on foot in company with his two aides, Capitan Tiago, the alcalde, the alferez, and Ibarra, preceded by civil-guards and officials who opened the way and cleared the street, was invited to review the procession from the house of the gobernadorcillo, in front of which a platform had been erected where a *loa*1 would be recited in honor of the Blessed Patron.

[295]Ibarra would gladly have renounced the pleasure of hearing this poetical composition, preferring to watch the procession from Capitan Tiago's house, where Maria Clara had remained with some of her friends, but his Excellency wished to hear the *loa*, so he had no recourse but to console himself with the prospect of seeing her at the theater.

The procession was headed by the silver candelabra borne by three begloved sacristans, behind whom came the school children in charge of their teacher, then boys with paper lanterns of varied shapes and colors placed on the ends of bamboo poles of greater or less length and decorated according to the caprice of each boy, since this illumination was furnished by the children of the barrios, who gladly performed this service, imposed by the *matanda sa nayon*,2 each one designing and fashioning his own lantern, adorning it as his fancy prompted and his finances permitted with a greater or less number of frills and little streamers, and lighting it with a piece of candle if he had a friend or relative who was a sacristan, or if he could buy one of the small red tapers such as the Chinese burn before their altars.

In the midst of the crowd came and went alguazils, guardians of justice to take care that the lines were not broken and the people did not crowd together. For this purpose they availed themselves of their rods, with blows from which, administered opportunely and with sufficient force, they endeavored to add to the glory and brilliance of the procession—all for the edification of souls and the [296]splendor of religious show. At the same time that the alguazils were thus distributing free their sanctifying blows,

other persons, to console the recipients, distributed candles and tapers of different sizes, also free.
"Señor Alcalde," said Ibarra in a low voice, "do they administer those blows as a punishment for sin or simply because they like to do so?"

"You're right, Señor Ibarra," answered the Captain-General, overhearing the question. "This barbarous sight is a wonder to all who come here from other countries. It ought to be forbidden."

Without any apparent reason, the first saint that appeared was St. John the Baptist. On looking at him it might have been said that the fame of Our Savior's cousin did not amount to much among the people, for while it is true that he had the feet and legs of a maiden and the face of an anchorite, yet he was placed on an old wooden *andas*, and was hidden by a crowd of children who, armed with candles and unlighted lanterns, were engaging in mock fights.

"Unfortunate saint!" muttered the Sage Tasio, who was watching the procession from the street, "it avails you nothing to have been the forerunner of the Good Tidings or that Jesus bowed before you! Your great faith and your austerity avail you nothing, nor the fact that you died for the truth and your convictions, all of which men forget when they consider nothing more than their own merits. It avails more to preach badly in the churches than to be the eloquent voice crying in the desert, this is what the Philippines teaches you! If you had eaten turkey instead of locusts and had worn garments of silk rather than hides, if you had joined a Corporation—"

But the old man suspended his apostrophe at the approach of St. Francis. "Didn't I say so?" he then went on, smiling sarcastically. "This one rides on a ear, and, good Heavens, what a car! How many lights and how many glass lanterns! Never did I see you surrounded by so [297]many luminaries, Giovanni Bernardone![3] And what music! Other tunes were heard by your followers after your death! But, venerable and humble founder, if you were to come back to life now you would see only degenerate Eliases of Cortona, and if your followers should recognize you, they would put you in jail, and perhaps you would share the fate of Cesareus of Spyre."
After the music came a banner on which was pictured the same saint, but with seven wings, carried by the Tertiary Brethren dressed in*guingón* habits and praying in high, plaintive voices. Rather inexplicably, next

came St. Mary Magdalene, a beautiful image with abundant hair, wearing a pañuelo of embroidered piña held by fingers covered with rings, and a silk gown decorated with gilt spangles. Lights and incense surrounded her while her glass tears reflected the colors of the Bengal lights, which, while giving a fantastic appearance to the procession, also made the saintly sinner weep now green, now red, now blue tears. The houses did not begin to light up until St. Francis was passing; St. John the Baptist did not enjoy this honor and passed hastily by as if ashamed to be the only one dressed in hides in such a crowd of folk covered with gold and jewels.

"There goes our saint!" exclaimed the daughter of the gobernadorcillo to her visitors. "I've lent him all my rings, but that's in order to get to heaven."

The candle-bearers stopped around the platform to listen to the *loa* and the blessed saints did the same; either they or their bearers wished to hear the verses. Those who were carrying St. John, tired of waiting, squatted down on their heels and agreed to set him on the ground.

"The alguazil may scold!" objected one of them.

"Huh, in the sacristy they leave him in a corner among the cobwebs!"

[298]So St. John, once on the ground, became one of the townsfolk.
As the Magdalene set out the women joined the procession, only that instead of beginning with the children, as among the men, the old women came first and the girls filled up the lines to the car of the Virgin, behind which came the curate under his canopy. This practise they had from Padre Damaso, who said: "To the Virgin the maidens and not the old women are pleasing!" This statement had caused wry faces on the part of many saintly old ladies, but the Virgin did not change her tastes.

San Diego followed the Magdalene but did not seem to be rejoicing over this fact, since he moved along as repentantly as he had in the morning when he followed St. Francis. His float was drawn by six Tertiary Sisters—whether because of some vow or on account of some sickness, the fact is that they dragged him along, and with zeal. San Diego stopped in front of the platform and waited to be saluted.

But it was necessary to wait for the float of the Virgin, which was preceded by persons dressed like phantoms, who frightened the little children so that

there were heard the cries and screams of terrified babies. Yet in the midst of that dark mass of gowns, hoods, girdles, and nuns' veils, from which arose a monotonous and snuffling prayer, there were to be seen, like white jasmines or fresh sampaguitas among old rags, twelve girls dressed in white, crowned with flowers, their hair curled, and flashing from their eyes glances as bright as their necklaces. Like little genii of light who were prisoners of specters they moved along holding to the wide blue ribbons tied to the Virgin's car and suggesting the doves that draw the car of Spring.

Now all the images were in attitudes of attention, crowded one against the other to listen to the verses. Everybody kept his eyes fixed on the half-drawn curtain until at length a sigh of admiration escaped from the lips of all. Deservedly [299]so, too, for it was a boy with wings, riding-boots, sash, belt, and plumed hat.

"It's the alcalde!" cried some one, but this prodigy of creation began to recite a poem like himself and took no offense at the comparison.

But why record here what he said in Latin, Tagalog, and Spanish, all in verse—this poor victim of the gobernadorcillo? Our readers have enjoyed Padre Damaso's sermon of the morning and we do not wish to spoil them by too many wonders. Besides, the Franciscan might feel hard toward us if we were to put forward a competitor, and this is far from being the desire of such peaceful folk as we have the good fortune to be.

Afterwards, the procession moved on, St. John proceeding along his vale of tears. When the Virgin passed the house of Capitan Tiago a heavenly song greeted her with the words of the archangel. It was a voice tender, melodious, pleading, sighing out the *Ave Maria* of Gounod to the accompaniment of a piano that prayed with it. The music of the procession became hushed, the praying ceased, and even Padre Salvi himself paused. The voice trembled and became plaintive, expressing more than a salutation —rather a prayer and a protest.

Terror and melancholy settled down upon Ibarra's heart as he listened to the voice from the window where he stood. He comprehended what that suffering soul was expressing in a song and yet feared to ask himself the cause of such sorrow. Gloomy and thoughtful, he turned to the Captain-General.

“You will join me at the table,” the latter said to him. “There we’ll talk about those boys who disappeared.”

“Could I be the cause?” murmured the young man, staring without seeing the Captain-General, whom he was following mechanically.[300]

1A metrical discourse for a special occasion or in honor of some distinguished personage. Padre Zuñiga (*Estadismo*, Chap. III) thus describes one heard by him in Lipa, Batangas, in 1800, on the occasion of General Alava’s visit to that place: “He who is to recite the *loa* is seen in the center of the stage dressed as a Spanish cavalier, reclining in a chair as if asleep, while behind the scenes musicians sing a lugubrious chant in the vernacular. The sleeper awakes and shows by signs that he thinks he has heard, or dreamed of hearing, some voice. He again disposes himself to sleep, and the chant is repeated in the same lugubrious tone. Again he awakes, rises, and shows that he has heard a voice. This scene is repeated several times, until at length he is persuaded that the voice is announcing the arrival of the hero who is to be eulogized. He then commences to recite his *loa*, carrying himself like a clown in a circus, while he sings the praises of the person in whose honor the fiesta has been arranged. This *loa*, which was in rhetorical verse in a diffuse style suited to the Asiatic taste, set forth the general’s naval expeditions and the honors he had received from the King, concluding with thanks and acknowledgment of the favor that he had conferred in passing through their town and visiting such poor wretches as they. There were not lacking in it the wanderings of Ulysses, the journeys of Aristotle, the unfortunate death of Pliny, and other passages from ancient history, which they delight in introducing into their stories. All these passages are usually filled with fables touching upon the marvelous, such as the following, which merit special[295n]notice: of Aristotle it was said that being unable to learn the depth of the sea he threw himself into its waves and was drowned, and of Pliny that he leaped into Vesuvius to investigate the fire within the volcano. In the same way other historical accounts are confused. I believe that these *loas* were introduced by the priests in former times, although the fables with which they abound would seem to offer an objection to this opinion, as nothing is ever told in them that can be found in the writings of any European author; still they appear to me to have been suited to the less critical taste of past centuries. The verses are written by the natives, among whom there are many poets, this art being less difficult in Tagalog than in any other language.”—TR.

2“The old man of the village,” patriarch.—TR.

3The secular name of St. Francis of Assisi, founder of the Franciscan order.—TR.

[Contents]

Chapter XXXIX
Doña Consolacion

Why were the windows closed in the house of the alferez? Where were the masculine features and the flannel camisa of the Medusa or Muse of the Civil Guard while the procession was passing? Had Doña Consolacion realized how disagreeable were her forehead seamed with thick veins that appeared to conduct not blood but vinegar and gall, and the thick cigar that made a fit ornament for her purple lips, and her envious leer, and yielding to a generous impulse had she wished not to disturb the pleasure of the populace by her sinister appearance? Ah, for her generous impulses existed in the Golden Age! The house, showed neither lanterns nor banners and was gloomy precisely because the town was making merry, as Sinang said, and but for the sentinel walking before the door appeared to be uninhabited.

A dim light shone in the disordered sala, rendering transparent the dirty concha-panes on which the cobwebs had fastened and the dust had become incrusted. The lady of the house, according to her indolent custom, was dozing on a wide sofa. She was dressed as usual, that is, badly and horribly: tied round her head a pañuelo, from beneath which escaped thin locks of tangled hair, a camisa of blue flannel over another which must once have been white, and a faded skirt which showed the outlines of her thin, flat thighs, placed one over the other and shaking feverishly. From her mouth issued little clouds of smoke which she puffed wearily in whatever direction she happened to be looking when she opened her eyes. If at that moment Don [301]Francisco de Cañamaque[1] could have seen her, he would have taken her for a cacique of the town or the *mankukúlam*, and then decorated his discovery with commentaries in the vernacular of the markets, invented by him for her particular use.

That morning she had not attended mass, not because she had not so desired, for on the contrary she had wished to show herself to the multitude and to hear the sermon, but her spouse had not permitted her to do so, his refusal being accompanied as usual by two or three insults, oaths, and threats of kicking. The alferez knew that his mate dressed ridiculously and had the appearance of what is known as a "*querida* of the soldiers," so he did not care to expose her to the gaze of strangers and persons from the capital. But she did not so understand it. She knew that she was beautiful

and attractive, that she had the airs of a queen and dressed much better and with more splendor than Maria Clara herself, who wore a tapis while she went in a flowing skirt. It was therefore necessary for the alferez to threaten her, “Either shut up, or I’ll kick you back to your damned town!” Doña Consolacion did not care to return to her town at the toe of a boot, but she meditated revenge.

Never had the dark face of this lady been such as to inspire confidence in any one, not even when she painted, but that morning it greatly worried the servants, especially when they saw her move about the house from one part to another, silently, as if meditating something terrible or malign. Her glance reflected the look that springs from the eyes of a serpent when caught and about to be crushed; it was cold, luminous, and penetrating, with something fascinating, [302]loathsome, and cruel in it. The most insignificant error, the least unusual noise, drew from her a vile insult that struck into the soul, but no one answered her, for to excuse oneself would have been an additional fault.

So the day passed. Not encountering any obstacle that would block her way, —her husband had been invited out,—she became saturated with bile, the cells of her whole organism seemed to become charged with electricity which threatened to burst in a storm of hate. Everything about her folded up as do the flowers at the first breath of the hurricane, so she met with no resistance nor found any point or high place to discharge her evil humor. The soldiers and servants kept away from her. That she might not hear the sounds of rejoicing outside she had ordered the windows closed and charged the sentinel to let no one enter. She tied a handkerchief around her head as if to keep it from bursting and, in spite of the fact that the sun was still shining, ordered the lamps to be lighted.

Sisa, as we saw, had been arrested as a disturber of the peace and taken to the barracks. The alferez was not then present, so the unfortunate woman had had to spend the night there seated on a bench in an abandoned attitude. The next day the alferez saw her, and fearing for her in those days of confusion nor caring to risk a disagreeable scene, he had charged the soldiers to look after her, to treat her kindly, and to give her something to eat. Thus the madwoman spent two days.

Tonight, whether the nearness to the house of Capitan Tiago had brought to her Maria Clara's sad song or whether other recollections awoke in her old melodies, whatever the cause, Sisa also began to sing in a sweet and melancholy voice the *kundíman* of her youth. The soldiers heard her and fell silent; those airs awoke old memories of the days before they had been corrupted. Doña Consolacion also heard them in her tedium, and on learning who it was that sang, after a few moments of meditation, ordered that Sisa [303]be brought to her instantly. Something like a smile wandered over her dry lips.

When Sisa was brought in she came calmly, showing neither wonder nor fear. She seemed to see no lady or mistress, and this wounded the vanity of the Muse, who endeavored to inspire respect and fear. She coughed, made a sign to the soldiers to leave her, and taking down her husband's whip, said to the crazy woman in a sinister tone, "Come on, *magcantar icau!*"[2]

Naturally, Sisa did not understand such Tagalog, and this ignorance calmed the Medusa's wrath, for one of the beautiful qualities of this lady was to try not to know Tagalog, or at least to appear not to know it. Speaking it the worst possible, she would thus give herself the air of a genuine *orofea*,[3] as she was accustomed to say. But she did well, for if she martyrized Tagalog, Spanish fared no better with her, either in regard to grammar or pronunciation, in spite of her husband, the chairs and the shoes, all of which had done what they could to teach her.

One of the words that had cost her more effort than the hieroglyphics cost Champollion was the name *Filipinas*. The story goes that on the day after her wedding, when she was talking with her husband, who was then a corporal, she had said *Pilipinas*. The corporal thought it his duty to correct her, so he said, slapping her on the head, "Say *Felipinas*, woman! Don't be stupid! Don't you know that's what your damned country is called, from *Felipe?*"

The woman, dreaming through her honeymoon, wished to obey and said *Felepinas*. To the corporal it seemed that she was getting nearer to it, so he increased the slaps and reprimanded her thus: "But, woman, can't you pronounce *Felipe?* Don't forget it; you know the king, Don Felipe—the fifth—. Say *Felipe*, and add to it *nas*, which in Latin means 'islands of Indians,' and you have the name of your damned country!"

[304]Consolacion, at that time a washerwoman, patted her bruises and repeated with symptoms of losing her patience, "Fe-li-pe, Felipe—nas, Fe-li-pe-nas, Felipinas, so?"

The corporal saw visions. How could it be *Felipenas* instead of *Felipinas?* One of two things: either it was *Felipenas* or it was necessary to say *Felipi!* So that day he very prudently dropped the subject. Leaving his wife, he went to consult the books. Here his astonishment reached a climax: he rubbed his eyes—let's see—slowly, now! *F-i-l-i-p-i-n-a-s*, Filipinas! So all the well-printed books gave it—neither he nor his wife was right!

"How's this?" he murmured. "Can history lie? Doesn't this book say that Alonso Saavedra gave the country that name in honor of the prince, Don Felipe? How was that name corrupted? Can it be that this Alonso Saavedra was an Indian?"[4]

With these doubts he went to consult the sergeant Gomez, who, as a youth, had wanted to be a curate. Without deigning to look at the corporal the sergeant blew out a mouthful of smoke and answered with great pompousness, "In ancient times it was pronounced *Filipi*instead of *Felipe*. But since we moderns have become Frenchified we can't endure two *i's* in succession, so cultured people, especially in Madrid—you've never been in Madrid?—cultured people, as I say, have begun to change the first *i* to *e* in many words. This is called modernizing yourself."

The poor corporal had never been in Madrid—here was the cause of his failure to understand the riddle: what things are learned in Madrid! "So now it's proper to say—"

"In the ancient style, man! This country's not yet cultured! [305]In the ancient style, *Filipinas!*" exclaimed Gomez disdainfully.

The corporal, even if he was a bad philologist, was yet a good husband. What he had just learned his spouse must also know, so he proceeded with her education: "Consola, what do you call your damned country?"

"What should I call it? Just what you taught me: *Felifinas!*"

"I'll throw a chair at you, you ———! Yesterday you pronounced it even better in the modern style, but now it's proper to pronounce it like an ancient: *Feli*, I mean, *Filipinas!*"

“Remember that I’m no ancient! What are you thinking about?”

“Never mind! Say *Filipinas!*”

“I don’t want to. I’m no ancient baggage, scarcely thirty years old!” she replied, rolling up her sleeves and preparing herself for the fray.

“Say it, you ———, or I’ll throw this chair at you!”

Consolacion saw the movement, reflected, then began to stammer with heavy breaths, “*Feli-, Fele-, File—*”

Pum! Crack! The chair finished the word. So the lesson ended in fisticuffs, scratchings, slaps. The corporal caught her by the hair; she grabbed his goatee, but was unable to bite because of her loose teeth. He let out a yell, released her and begged her pardon. Blood began to flow, one eye got redder than the other, a camisa was torn into shreds, many things came to light, but not *Filipinas*.

Similar incidents occurred every time the question of language came up. The corporal, watching her linguistic progress, sorrowfully calculated that in ten years his mate would have completely forgotten how to talk, and this was about what really came to pass. When they were married she still knew Tagalog and could make herself understood in Spanish, but now, at the time of our story, she no longer spoke any language. She had become so addicted to expressing herself by means of signs—and of these she chose [306]the loudest and most impressive—that she could have given odds to the inventor of Volapuk.

Sisa, therefore, had the good fortune not to understand her, so the Medusa smoothed out her eyebrows a little, while a smile of satisfaction lighted up her face; undoubtedly she did not know Tagalog, she was an *orofea!*

“Boy, tell her in Tagalog to sing! She doesn’t understand me, she doesn’t understand Spanish!”

The madwoman understood the boy and began to sing the *Song of the Night*. Doña Consolacion listened at first with a sneer, which disappeared little by little from her lips. She became attentive, then serious, and even somewhat thoughtful. The voice, the sentiment in the lines, and the song itself affected her—that dry and withered heart was perhaps thirsting for

rain. She understood it well: “The sadness, the cold, and the moisture that descend from the sky when wrapped in the mantle of night,” so ran the *kundíman*, seemed to be descending also on her heart. “The withered and faded flower which during the day flaunted her finery, seeking applause and full of vanity, at eventide, repentant and disenchanted, makes an effort to raise her drooping petals to the sky, seeking a little shade to hide herself and die without the mocking of the light that saw her in her splendor, without seeing the vanity of her pride, begging also that a little dew should weep upon her. The nightbird leaves his solitary retreat, the hollow of an ancient trunk, and disturbs the sad loneliness of the open places—”

“No, don’t sing!” she exclaimed in perfect Tagalog, as she rose with agitation. “Don’t sing! Those verses hurt me.”

The crazy woman became silent. The boy ejaculated, “*Abá!* She talks Tagalog!” and stood staring with admiration at his mistress, who, realizing that she had given herself away, was ashamed of it, and as her nature was not that of a woman, the shame took the aspect of rage and [307]hate; so she showed the door to the imprudent boy and closed it behind him with a kick. Twisting the whip in her nervous hands, she took a few turns around the room, then stopping suddenly in front of the crazy woman, said to her in Spanish, “Dance!” But Sisa did not move.

“Dance, dance!” she repeated in a sinister tone.

The madwoman looked at her with wandering, expressionless eyes, while the alfereza lifted one of her arms, then the other, and shook them, but to no purpose, for Sisa did not understand. Then she began to jump about and shake herself, encouraging Sisa to imitate her. In the distance was to be heard the music of the procession playing a grave and majestic march, but Doña Consolacion danced furiously, keeping other time to other music resounding within her. Sisa gazed at her without moving, while her eyes expressed curiosity and something like a weak smile hovered around her pallid lips: the lady’s dancing amused her. The latter stopped as if ashamed, raised the whip,—that terrible whip known to thieves and soldiers, made in Ulango[5] and perfected by the alferez with twisted wires,—and said, “Now it’s your turn to dance—dance!”

She began to strike the madwoman's bare feet gently with the whip. Sisa's face drew up with pain and she was forced to protect herself with her hands.

"Aha, now you're starting!" she exclaimed with savage joy, passing from *lento* to *allegro vivace*.

The afflicted Sisa gave a cry of pain and quickly raised her foot.

"You've got to dance, you Indian—!" The whip swung and whistled.

Sisa let herself fall to the floor and placed both hands on her knees while she gazed at her tormentor with wildly-staring eyes. Two sharp cuts of the whip on her shoulder made her stand up, and it was not merely a cry but a howl [308]that the unfortunate woman uttered. Her thin camisa was torn, her skin broken, and the blood was flowing.
The sight of blood arouses the tiger; the blood of her victim aroused Doña Consolacion. "Dance, damn you, dance! Evil to the mother who bore you!" she cried. "Dance, or I'll flog you to death!" She then caught Sisa with one hand and, whipping her with the other, began to dance about.

The crazy woman at last understood and followed the example by swinging her arms about awkwardly. A smile of satisfaction curled the lips of her teacher, the smile of a female Mephistopheles who succeeds in getting a great pupil. There were in it hate, disdain, jest, and cruelty; with a burst of demoniacal laughter she could not have expressed more.

Thus, absorbed in the joy of the sight, she was not aware of the arrival of her husband until he opened the door with a loud kick. The alferez appeared pale and gloomy, and when he saw what was going on he threw a terrible glance at his wife, who did not move from her place but stood smiling at him cynically.

The alferez put his hand as gently as he could on the shoulder of the strange dancer and made her stop. The crazy woman sighed and sank slowly to the floor covered with her own blood.

The silence continued. The alferez breathed heavily, while his wife watched him with questioning eyes. She picked up the whip and asked in a smooth, soft voice, "What's the matter with you? You haven't even wished me good evening."

The alferez did not answer, but instead called the boy and said to him, “Take this woman away and tell Marta to get her some other clothes and attend to her. You give her something to eat and a good bed. Take care that she isn’t ill-treated! Tomorrow she’ll be taken to Señor Ibarra’s house.”

Then he closed the door carefully, bolted it, and approached [309]his wife. “You’re tempting me to kill you!” he exclaimed, doubling up his fists.
“What’s the matter with you?” she asked, rising and drawing away from him.

“What’s the matter with me!” he yelled in a voice of thunder, letting out an oath and holding up before her a sheet of paper covered with scrawls. “Didn’t you write this letter to the alcalde saying that I’m bribed to permit gambling, huh? I don’t know why I don’t beat you to death.”

“Let’s see you! Let’s see you try it if you dare!” she replied with a jeering laugh. “The one who beats me to death has got to be more of a man than you are!”

He heard the insult, but saw the whip. Catching up a plate from the table, he threw it at her head, but she, accustomed to such fights, dodged quickly and the plate was shattered against the wall. A cup and saucer met with a similar fate.

“Coward!” she yelled; “you’re afraid to come near me!” And to exasperate him the more, she spat upon him.

The alferez went blind from rage and with a roar attempted to throw himself upon her, but she, with astonishing quickness, hit him across the face with the whip and ran hurriedly into an inner room, shutting and bolting the door violently behind her. Bellowing with rage and pain, he followed, but was only able to run against the door, which made him vomit oaths.

“Accursed be your offspring, you sow! Open, open, or I’ll break your head!” he howled, beating the door with his hands and feet.

No answer was heard, but instead the scraping of chairs and trunks as if she was building a barricade with the furniture. The house shook under the kicks and curses of the alferez.

“Don’t come in, don’t come in!” called the sour voice inside. “If you show yourself, I’ll shoot you.”

[310]By degrees he appeared to become calm and contented himself with walking up and down the room like a wild beast in its cage.
“Go out into the street and cool off your head!” the woman continued to jeer at him, as she now seemed to have completed her preparations for defense.

“I swear that if I catch you, even God won’t save you, you old sow!”

“Yes, now you can say what you like. You didn’t want me to go to mass! You didn’t let me attend to my religious duties!” she answered with such sarcasm as only she knew how to use.

The alferez put on his helmet, arranged his clothing a little, and went out with heavy steps, but returned after a few minutes without making the least noise, having taken off his shoes. The servants, accustomed to these brawls, were usually bored, but this novelty of the shoes attracted their attention, so they winked to one another. The alferez sat down quietly in a chair at the side of the Sublime Port and had the patience to wait for more than half an hour.

“Have you really gone out or are you still there, old goat?” asked the voice from time to time, changing the epithets and raising the tone. At last she began to take away the furniture piece by piece. He heard the noise and smiled.

“Boy, has your master gone out?” cried Doña Consolacion.

At a sign from the alferez the boy answered, “Yes, señora, he’s gone out.”

A gleeful laugh was heard from her as she pulled back the bolt. Slowly her husband arose, the door opened a little way—

A yell, the sound of a falling body, oaths, howls, curses, blows, hoarse voices—who can tell what took place in the darkness of that room?

As the boy went out into the kitchen he made a significant [311]sign to the cook, who said to him, “You’ll pay for that.”

“I? In any case the whole town will! She asked me if he had gone out, not if he had come back!”[312]

1A Spanish official, author of several works relating to the Philippines, one of which, *Recuerdos de Filipinas* (Madrid, 1877 and 1880), a loose series of sketches and impressions giving anything but a complimentary picture of the character and conduct of the Spaniards in the Islands, and in a rather naive and perhaps unintentional way throwing some lurid side-lights on the governmental administration and the friar régime,—enjoyed the distinction of being officially prohibited from circulation in the archipelago.—TR.

2“*Magcanta-ca!*” “(You) sing!”—TR.

3Europea: European woman.—TR.

4In 1527–29 *Alvaro* de Saavedra led an unsuccessful expedition to take possession of the “Western Isles.” The name “Filipina,” in honor of the Prince of the Asturias, afterwards Felipe II (Philip II), was first applied to what is probably the present island of Leyte by Ruy Lopez de Villalobos, who led another unsuccessful expedition thither in 1542–43, this name being later extended to the whole group.—TR.

5A barrio of Tanawan, Batangas, noted for the manufacture of horsewhips.—TR.

[Contents]

Chapter XL
Right and Might

Ten o'clock at night: the last rockets rose lazily in the dark sky where a few paper balloons recently inflated with smoke and hot air still glimmered like new stars. Some of those adorned with fireworks took fire, threatening all the houses, so there might be seen on the ridges of the roofs men armed with pails of water and long poles with pieces of cloth on the ends. Their black silhouettes stood out in the vague clearness of the air like phantoms that had descended from space to witness the rejoicings of men. Many pieces of fireworks of fantastic shapes—wheels, castles, bulls, carabaos—had been set off, surpassing in beauty and grandeur anything ever before seen by the inhabitants of San Diego.

Now the people were moving in crowds toward the plaza to attend the theater for the last time, Here and there might be seen Bengal lights fantastically illuminating the merry groups while the boys were availing themselves of torches to hunt in the grass for unexploded bombs and other remnants that could still be used. But soon the music gave the signal and all abandoned the open places.

The great stage was brilliantly illuminated. Thousands of lights surrounded the posts, hung from the roof, or sowed the floor with pyramidal clusters. An alguazil was looking after these, and when he came forward to attend to them the crowd shouted at him and whistled, "There he is! there he is!"

In front of the curtain the orchestra players were tuning their instruments and playing preludes of airs. Behind them was the space spoken of by the correspondent in his [313]letter, where the leading citizens of the town, the Spaniards, and the rich visitors occupied rows of chairs. The general public, the nameless rabble, filled up the rest of the place, some of them bringing benches on their shoulders not so much for seats as to make, up for their lack of stature. This provoked noisy protests on the part of the benchless, so the offenders got down at once; but before long they were up again as if nothing had happened.

Goings and comings, cries, exclamations, bursts of laughter, a serpent-cracker turned loose, a firecracker set off—all contributed to swell the uproar. Here a bench had a leg broken off and the people fell to the ground

amid the laughter of the crowd. They were visitors who had come from afar to observe and now found themselves the observed. Over there they quarreled and disputed over a seat, a little farther on was heard the noise of breaking glass; it was Andeng carrying refreshments and drinks, holding the wide tray carefully with both hands, but by chance she had met her sweetheart, who tried to take advantage of the situation.

The teniente-mayor, Don Filipo, presided over the show, as the gobernadorcillo was fond of monte. He was talking with old Tasio. "What can I do? The alcalde was unwilling to accept my resignation. 'Don't you feel strong enough to attend to your duties?' he asked me."

"How did you answer him?"

"'Señor Alcalde,' I answered, 'the strength of a teniente-mayor, however insignificant it may be, is like all other authority it emanates from higher spheres. The King himself receives his strength from the people and the people theirs from God. That is exactly what I lack, Señor Alcalde.' But he did not care to listen to me, telling me that we would talk about it after the fiesta."

"Then may God help you!" said the old man, starting away.

"Don't you want to see the show?"

"Thanks, no! For dreams and nonsense I am sufficient [314]unto myself," the Sage answered with a sarcastic smile. "But now I think of it, has your attention never been drawn to the character of our people? Peaceful, yet fond of warlike shows and bloody fights; democratic, yet adoring emperors, kings, and princes; irreligious, yet impoverishing itself by costly religious pageants. Our women have gentle natures yet go wild with joy when a princess flourishes a lance. Do you know to what it is due? Well—"

The arrival of Maria Clara and her friends put an end to this conversation. Don Filipo met them and ushered them to their seats. Behind them came the curate with another Franciscan and some Spaniards. Following the priests were a number of the townsmen who make it their business to escort the friars. "May God reward them also in the next life," muttered old Tasio as he went away.

The play began with Chananay and Marianito in *Crispino é la comare*. All now had their eyes and ears turned to the stage, all but one: Padre Salvi, who seemed to have gone there for no other purpose than that of watching Maria Clara, whose sadness gave to her beauty an air so ideal and interesting that it was easy to understand how she might be looked upon with rapture. But the eyes of the Franciscan, deeply hidden in their sunken sockets, spoke nothing of rapture. In that gloomy gaze was to be read something desperately sad—with such eyes Cain might have gazed from afar on the Paradise whose delights his mother pictured to him!

The first scene was over when Ibarra entered. His appearance caused a murmur, and attention was fixed on him and the curate. But the young man seemed not to notice anything as he greeted Maria Clara and her friends in a natural way and took a seat beside them.

The only one who spoke to him was Sinang. "Did you see the fireworks?" she asked.

"No, little friend, I had to go with the Captain-General."

"Well, that's a shame! The curate was with us and [315]told us stories of the damned—can you imagine it!—to fill us with fear so that we might not enjoy ourselves—can you imagine it!"
The curate arose and approached Don Filipo, with whom he began an animated conversation. The former spoke in a nervous manner, the latter in a low, measured voice.

"I'm sorry that I can't please your Reverence," said Don Filipo, "but Señor Ibarra is one of the heaviest contributors and has a right to be here as long as he doesn't disturb the peace."

"But isn't it disturbing the peace to scandalize good Christians? It's letting a wolf enter the fold. You will answer for this to God and the authorities!"

"I always answer for the actions that spring from my own will, Padre," replied Don Filipo with a slight bow. "But my little authority does not empower me to mix in religious affairs. Those who wish to avoid contact with him need not talk to him. Señor Ibarra forces himself on no one."

“But it’s giving opportunity for danger, and he who loves danger perishes in it.”

“I don’t see any danger, Padre. The alcalde and the Captain-General, my superior officers, have been talking with him all the afternoon and it’s not for me to teach them a lesson.”

“If you don’t put him out of here, we’ll leave.”

“I’m very sorry, but I can’t put any one out of here.” The curate repented of his threat, but it was too late to retract, so he made a sign to his companion, who arose with regret, and the two went out together. The persons attached to them followed their example, casting looks of hatred at Ibarra.

The murmurs and whispers increased. A number of people approached the young man and said to him, “We’re with you, don’t take any notice of them.”

“Whom do you mean by *them?*” Ibarra asked in surprise.

[316]“Those who’ve just left to avoid contact with you.”
“Left to avoid contact with me?”

“Yes, they say that you’re excommunicated.”

“Excommunicated?” The astonished youth did not know what to say. He looked about him and saw that Maria Clara was hiding her face behind her fan. “But is it possible?” he exclaimed finally. “Are we still in the Dark Ages? So—”

He approached the young women and said with a change of tone, “Excuse me, I’ve forgotten an engagement. I’ll be back to see you home.”

“Stay!” Sinang said to him. “Yeyeng is going to dance *La Calandria*. She dances divinely.”

“I can’t, little friend, but I’ll be back.” The uproar increased.

Yeyeng appeared fancifully dressed, with the “*Da usté su permiso*?” and Carvajal was answering her, “*Pase usté adelante*,” when two soldiers of the Civil Guard went up to Don Filipo and ordered him to stop the performance.

“Why?” asked the teniente-mayor in surprise.

“Because the alferez and his wife have been fighting and can’t sleep.”

“Tell the alferez that we have permission from the alcalde and that against such permission *no one* in the town has any authority, not even the gobernadorcillo himself, and *he* is my *only superior*.”

“Well, the show must stop!” repeated the soldiers. Don Filipo turned his back and they went away. In order not to disturb the merriment he told no one about the incident.

After the selection of vaudeville, which was loudly applauded, the Prince Villardo presented himself, challenging to mortal combat the Moros who held his father prisoner. The hero threatened to cut off all their heads at a single stroke and send them to the moon, but fortunately for the Moros, who were disposing themselves for the combat, a tumult arose. The orchestra suddenly ceased playing,[317]threw their instruments away, and jumped up on the stage. The valiant Villardo, not expecting them and taking them for allies of the Moros, dropped his sword and shield, and started to run. The Moros, seeing that such a doughty Christian was fleeing, did not consider it improper to imitate him. Cries, groans, prayers, oaths were heard, while the people ran and pushed one another about. The lights were extinguished, blazing lamps were thrown into the air. “Tulisanes! Tulisanes!” cried some. “Fire, fire! Robbers!” shouted others. Women and children wept, benches and spectators were rolled together on the ground amid the general pandemonium.
The cause of all this uproar was two civil-guards, clubs in hand, chasing the musicians in order to break up the performance. The teniente-mayor, with the aid of the cuadrilleros, who were armed with old sabers, managed at length to arrest them, in spite of their resistance.

“Take them to the town hall!” cried Don Filipo. “Take care that they don’t get away!”

Ibarra had returned to look for Maria Clara. The frightened girls clung to him pale and trembling while Aunt Isabel recited the Latin litany.

When the people were somewhat calmed down from their fright and had learned the cause of the disturbance, they were beside themselves with

indignation. Stones rained on the squad of cuadrilleros who were conducting the two offenders from the scene, and there were even those who proposed to set fire to the barracks of the Civil Guard so as to roast Doña Consolacion along with the alferez.

“That’s what they’re good for!” cried a woman, doubling up her fists and stretching out her arms. “To disturb the town! They don’t chase any but honest folks! Out yonder are the tulisanes and the gamblers. Let’s set fire to the barracks!”

One man was beating himself on the arm and begging for confession. Plaintive sounds issued from under the [318]overturned benches—it was a poor musician. The stage was crowded with actors and spectators, all talking at the same time. There was Chananay dressed as Leonor in *Il Trovatore*, talking in the language of the markets to Ratia in the costume of a schoolmaster; Yeyeng, wrapped in a silk shawl, was clinging to the Prince Villardo; while Balbino and the Moros were exerting themselves to console the more or less injured musicians.1 Several Spaniards went from group to group haranguing every one they met.

A large crowd was forming, whose intention Don Filipo seemed to be aware of, for he ran to stop them. “Don’t disturb the peace!” he cried. “Tomorrow we’ll ask for an accounting and we’ll get justice. I’ll answer for it that we get justice!”

“No!” was the reply of several. “They did the same thing in Kalamba,2 the same promise was made, but the alcalde did nothing. We’ll take the law into our own hands! To the barracks!”

In vain the teniente-mayor pleaded with them. The crowd maintained its hostile attitude, so he looked about him for help and noticed Ibarra.

“Señor Ibarra, as a favor! Restrain them while I get some cuadrilleros.”

“What can I do?” asked the perplexed youth, but the teniente-mayor was already at a distance. He gazed about him seeking he knew not whom, when accidentally he discerned Elias, who stood impassively watching the disturbance.

Ibarra ran to him, caught him by the arm, and said to him in Spanish: “For God’s sake, do something, if you can! I can’t do anything.” The pilot must

have understood him, for he disappeared in the crowd. Lively disputes [319]and sharp exclamations were heard. Gradually the crowd began to break up, its members each taking a less hostile attitude. It was high time, indeed, for the soldiers were already rushing out armed and with fixed bayonets.

Meanwhile, what had the curate been doing? Padre Salvi had not gone to bed but had stood motionless, resting his forehead against the curtains and gazing toward the plaza. From time to time a suppressed sigh escaped him, and if the light of the lamp had not been so dim, perhaps it would have been possible to see his eyes fill with tears. Thus nearly an hour passed.

The tumult in the plaza awoke him from his reverie. With startled eyes he saw the confused movements of the people, while their voices came up to him faintly. A breathless servant informed him of what was happening. A thought shot across his mind: in the midst of confusion and tumult is the time when libertines take advantage of the consternation and weakness of woman. Every one seeks to save himself, no one thinks of any one else; a cry is not heard or heeded, women faint, are struck and fall, terror and fright heed not shame, under the cover of night—and when they are in love! He imagined that he saw Crisostomo snatch the fainting Maria Clara up in his arms and disappear into the darkness. So he went down the stairway by leaps and bounds, and without hat or cane made for the plaza like a madman. There he met some Spaniards who were reprimanding the soldiers, but on looking toward the seats that the girls had occupied he saw that they were vacant.

“Padre! Padre!” cried the Spaniards, but he paid no attention to them as he ran in the direction of Capitan Tiago’s. There he breathed more freely, for he saw in the open hallway the adorable silhouette, full of grace and soft in outline, of Maria Clara, and that of the aunt carrying cups and glasses.

“Ah!” he murmured, “it seems that she has been taken sick only.”

[320]Aunt Isabel at that moment closed the windows and the graceful shadow was no longer to be seen. The curate moved away without heeding the crowd. He had before his eyes the beautiful form of a maiden sleeping and breathing sweetly. Her eyelids were shaded by long lashes which formed graceful curves like those of the Virgins of Raphael, the little mouth was smiling, all the features breathed forth virginity, purity, and innocence.

That countenance formed a sweet vision in the midst of the white coverings of her bed like the head of a cherub among the clouds. His imagination went still further—but who can write what a burning brain can imagine? Perhaps only the newspaper correspondent, who concluded his account of the fiesta and its accompanying incidents in the following manner:

"A thousand thanks, infinite thanks, to the opportune and active intervention of the Very Reverend Padre Fray Bernardo Salvi, who, defying every danger in the midst of the unbridled mob, without hat or cane, calmed the wrath of the crowd, using only his persuasive word with the majesty and authority that are never lacking to a minister of a Religion of Peace. With unparalleled self-abnegation this virtuous priest tore himself from sweet repose, such as every good conscience like his enjoys, and rushed to protect his flock from the least harm. The people of San Diego will hardly forget this sublime deed of their heroic Pastor, remembering to hold themselves grateful to him for all eternity!"[321]

1The actors named were real persons. Ratia was a Spanish-Filipino who acquired quite a reputation not only in Manila but also in Spain. He died in Manila in 1910.—TR.

2In the year 1879.—*Author's note*.

[Contents]

Chapter XLI
Two Visits

Ibarra was in such a state of mind that he found it impossible to sleep, so to distract his attention from the sad thoughts which are so exaggerated during the night-hours he set to work in his lonely cabinet. Day found him still making mixtures and combinations, to the action of which he subjected pieces of bamboo and other substances, placing them afterwards in numbered and sealed jars.

A servant entered to announce the arrival of a man who had the appearance of being from the country. “Show him in,” said Ibarra without looking around.

Elias entered and remained standing in silence.

“Ah, it’s you!” exclaimed Ibarra in Tagalog when he recognized him. “Excuse me for making you wait, I didn’t notice that it was you. I’m making an important experiment.”

“I don’t want to disturb you,” answered the youthful pilot. “I’ve come first to ask you if there is anything I can do for you in the province, of Batangas, for which I am leaving immediately, and also to bring you some bad news.”

Ibarra questioned him with a look.

“Capitan Tiago’s daughter is ill,” continued Elias quietly, “but not seriously.”

“That’s what I feared,” murmured Ibarra in a weak voice. “Do you know what is the matter with her?”

“A fever. Now, if you have nothing to command—”

“Thank you, my friend, no. I wish you a pleasant journey. But first let me ask you a question—if it is indiscreet, do not answer.”

Elias bowed.

[322]“How were you able to quiet the disturbance last night?” asked Ibarra, looking steadily at him.

“Very easily,” answered Elias in the most natural manner. “The leaders of the commotion were two brothers whose father died from a beating given him by the Civil Guard. One day I had the good fortune to save them from the same hands into which their father had fallen, and both are accordingly grateful to me. I appealed to them last night and they undertook to dissuade the rest.”

“And those two brothers whose father died from the beating—”

“Will end as their father did,” replied Elias in a low voice. “When misfortune has once singled out a family all its members must perish,—when the lightning strikes a tree the whole is reduced to ashes.”

Ibarra fell silent on hearing this, so Elias took his leave. When the youth found himself alone he lost the serene self-possession he had maintained in the pilot’s presence. His sorrow pictured itself on his countenance. “I, I have made her suffer,” he murmured.

He dressed himself quickly and descended the stairs. A small man, dressed in mourning, with a large scar on his left cheek, saluted him humbly, and detained him on his way.

“What do you want?” asked Ibarra.

“Sir, my name is Lucas, and I’m the brother of the man who was killed yesterday.”

“Ah, you have my sympathy. Well?”

“Sir, I want to know how much you’re going to pay my brother’s family.”

“Pay?” repeated the young man, unable to conceal his disgust. “We’ll talk of that later. Come back this afternoon, I’m in a hurry now.”

“Only tell me how much you’re willing to pay,” insisted Lucas.

“I’ve told you that we’ll talk about that some other time. I haven’t time now,” repeated Ibarra impatiently.

[323]“You haven’t time now, sir?” asked Lucas bitterly, placing himself in front of the young man. “You haven’t time to consider the dead?”

“Come this afternoon, my good man,” replied Ibarra, restraining himself. “I’m on my way now to visit a sick person.”

“Ah, for the sick you forget the dead? Do you think that because we are poor—”

Ibarra looked at him and interrupted, “Don’t try my patience!” then went on his way.

Lucas stood looking after him with a smile full of hate. “It’s easy to see that you’re the grandson of the man who tied my father out in the sun,” he muttered between his teeth. “You still have the same blood.”

Then with a change of tone he added, “But, if you pay well—friends!”[324]
[Contents]

Chapter XLII
The Espadañas

The fiesta is over. The people of the town have again found, as in every other year, that their treasury is poorer, that they have worked, sweated, and stayed awake much without really amusing themselves, without gaining any new friends, and, in a word, that they have dearly bought their dissipation and their headaches. But this matters nothing, for the same will be done next year, the same the coming century, since it has always been the custom.

In Capitan Tiago's house sadness reigns. All the windows are closed, the inmates move about noiselessly, and only in the kitchen do they dare to speak in natural tones. Maria Clara, the soul of the house, lies sick in bed and her condition is reflected in all the faces, as the sorrows of the mind may be read in the countenance of an individual.

"Which seems best to you, Isabel, shall I make a poor-offering to the cross of Tunasan or to the cross of Matahong?" asks the afflicted father in a low voice. "The Tunasan cross grows while the Matahong cross sweats which do you think is more miraculous?"

Aunt Isabel reflects, shakes her head, and murmurs, "To grow, to grow is a greater miracle than to sweat. All of us sweat, but not all of us grow."

"That's right, Isabel; but remember that to sweat for the wood of which bench-legs are made to sweat—is not a small miracle. Come, the best thing will be to make poor-offerings to both crosses, so neither will resent it, and Maria will get better sooner. Are the rooms ready? You [325]know that with the doctors is coming a new gentleman, a distant relative of Padre Damaso's. Nothing should be lacking."

At the other end of the dining-room are the two cousins, Sinang and Victoria, who have come to keep the sick girl company. Andeng is helping them clean a silver tea-set.

"Do you know Dr. Espadaña?" the foster-sister of Maria Clara asks Victoria curiously.

“No,” replies the latter, “the only thing that I know about him is that he charges high, according to Capitan Tiago.”

“Then he must be good!” exclaims Andeng. “The one who performed an operation on Doña Maria charged high; so he was learned.”

“Silly!” retorts Sinang. “Every one who charges high is not learned. Look at Dr. Guevara; after performing a bungling operation that cost the life of both mother and child, he charged the widower fifty pesos. The thing to know is how to charge!”

“What do you know about it?” asks her cousin, nudging her.

“Don’t I know? The husband, who is a poor sawyer, after losing his wife had to lose his home also, for the alcalde, being a friend of the doctor’s, made him pay. Don’t I know about it, when my father lent him the money to make the journey to Santa Cruz?”[1]

The sound of a carriage stopping in front of the house put an end to these conversations. Capitan Tiago, followed by Aunt Isabel, ran down the steps to welcome the new arrivals: the Doctor Don Tiburcio de Espadaña, his señora the *Doctora* Doña Victorina de los Reyes *de* De Espadaña, and a young Spaniard of pleasant countenance and agreeable aspect.

Doña Victorina was attired in a loose silk gown embroidered with flowers and a hat with a huge parrot half-crushed between blue and red ribbons. The dust of the [326]road mingled with the rice-powder on her cheeks seemed to accentuate her wrinkles. As at the time we saw her in Manila, she now supported her lame husband on her arm.

“I have the pleasure of introducing to you our cousin, Don Alfonso Linares de Espadaña,” said Doña Victorina, indicating their young companion. “The gentleman is a godson of a relative of Padre Damaso’s and has been private secretary to all the ministers.”

The young man bowed politely and Capitan Tiago came very near to kissing his hand.

While their numerous trunks and traveling-bags are being carried in and Capitan Tiago is conducting them to their rooms, let us talk a little of this couple whose acquaintance we made slightly in the first chapters.

Doña Victorina was a lady of forty and five winters, which were equivalent to thirty and two summers according to her arithmetical calculations. She had been beautiful in her youth, having had, as she used to say, ‘good flesh,’ but in the ecstasies of contemplating herself she had looked with disdain on her many Filipino admirers, since her aspirations were toward another race. She had refused to bestow on any one her little white hand, not indeed from distrust, for not a few times had she given jewelry and gems of great value to various foreign and Spanish adventurers. Six months before the time of our story she had seen realized her most beautiful dream,—the dream of her whole life,—for which she might scorn the fond illusions of her youth and even the promises of love that Capitan Tiago had in other days whispered in her ear or sung in some serenade. Late, it is true, had the dream been realized, but Doña Victorina, who, although she spoke the language badly, was more Spanish than Augustina of Saragossa,[2] understood the proverb, “Better late than never,” and found consolation in repeating it to herself. “Absolute happiness does not exist on earth,” [327]was another favorite proverb of hers, but she never used both together before other persons.

Having passed her first, second, third, and fourth youth in casting her nets in the sea of the world for the object of her vigils, she had been compelled at last to content herself with what fate was willing to apportion her. Had the poor woman been only thirty and one instead of thirty and two summers —the difference according to her mode of reckoning was great—she would have restored to Destiny the award it offered her to wait for another more suited to her taste, but since man proposes and necessity disposes, she saw herself obliged in her great need for a husband to content herself with a poor fellow who had been cast out from Estremadura[3] and who, after wandering about the world for six or seven years like a modern Ulysses, had at last found on the island of Luzon hospitality and a withered Calypso for his better half. This unhappy mortal, by name Tiburcio Espadaña, was only thirty-five years of age and looked like an old man, yet he was, nevertheless, younger than Doña Victorina, who was only thirty-two. The reason for this is easy to understand but dangerous to state.

Don Tiburcio had come to the Philippines as a petty official in the Customs, but such had been his bad luck that, besides suffering severely from seasickness and breaking a leg during the voyage, he had been dismissed within a fortnight, just at the time when he found himself without a cuarto.

After his rough experience on the sea he did not care to return to Spain without having made his fortune, so he decided to devote himself to something. Spanish pride forbade him to engage in manual labor, although the poor fellow would gladly have done any kind of work in order to earn an honest living. But the prestige of the Spaniards would not have allowed it, even though this prestige did not protect him from want.

[328]At first he had lived at the expense of some of his countrymen, but in his honesty the bread tasted bitter, so instead of getting fat he grew thin. Since he had neither learning nor money nor recommendations he was advised by his countrymen, who wished to get rid of him, to go to the provinces and pass himself off as a doctor of medicine. He refused at first, for he had learned nothing during the short period that he had spent as an attendant in a hospital, his duties there having been to dust off the benches and light the fires. But as his wants were pressing and as his scruples were soon laid to rest by his friends he finally listened to them and went to the provinces. He began by visiting some sick persons, and at first made only moderate charges, as his conscience dictated, but later, like the young philosopher of whom Samaniego[4] tells, he ended by putting a higher price on his visits. Thus he soon passed for a great physician and would probably have made his fortune if the medical authorities in Manila had not heard of his exorbitant fees and the competition that he was causing others. Both private parties and professionals interceded for him. "Man," they said to the zealous medical official, "let him make his stake and as soon as he has six or seven thousand pesos he can go back home and live there in peace. After all, what does it matter to you if he does deceive the unwary Indians? They should be more careful! He's a poor devil—don't take the bread from his mouth—be a good Spaniard!" This official was a good Spaniard and agreed to wink at the matter, but the news soon reached the ears of the people and they began to distrust him, so in a little while he lost his practise and again saw himself obliged almost to [329]beg his daily bread. It was then that he learned through a friend, who was an intimate acquaintance of Doña Victorina's, of the dire straits in which that lady was placed and also of her patriotism and her kind heart. Don Tiburcio then saw a patch of blue sky and asked to be introduced to her.

Doña Victorina and Don Tiburcio met: *tarde venientibus ossa*,[5] he would have exclaimed had he known Latin! She was no longer passable, she was

passée. Her abundant hair had been reduced to a knot about the size of an onion, according to her maid, while her face was furrowed with wrinkles and her teeth were falling loose. Her eyes, too, had suffered considerably, so that she squinted frequently in looking any distance. Her disposition was the only part of her that remained intact.

At the end of a half-hour's conversation they understood and accepted each other. She would have preferred a Spaniard who was less lame, less stuttering, less bald, less toothless, who slobbered less when he talked, and who had more "spirit" and "quality," as she used to say, but that class of Spaniards no longer came to seek her hand. She had more than once heard it said that opportunity is pictured as being bald, and firmly believed that Don Tiburcio was opportunity itself, for as a result of his misfortunes he suffered from premature baldness. And what woman is not prudent at thirty-two years of age?

Don Tiburcio, for his part, felt a vague melancholy when he thought of his honeymoon, but smiled with resignation and called to his support the specter of hunger. Never had he been ambitious or pretentious; his tastes were simple and his desires limited; but his heart, untouched till then, had dreamed of a very different divinity. Back there in his youth when, worn out with work, he lay doom on his rough bed after a frugal meal, he used to fall asleep dreaming of an image, smiling and tender. Afterwards, when troubles and privations increased and with the [330]passing of years the poetical image failed to materialize, he thought modestly of a good woman, diligent and industrious, who would bring him a small dowry, to console him for the fatigues of his toil and to quarrel with him now and then—yes, he had thought of quarrels as a kind of happiness! But when obliged to wander from land to land in search not so much of fortune as of some simple means of livelihood for the remainder of his days; when, deluded by the stories of his countrymen from overseas, he had set out for the Philippines, realism gave, place to an arrogant mestiza or a beautiful Indian with big black eyes, gowned in silks and transparent draperies, loaded down with gold and diamonds, offering him her love, her carriages, her all. When he reached Manila he thought for a time that his dream was to be realized, for the young women whom he saw driving on the Luneta and the Malecon in silver-mounted carriages had gazed at him with some curiosity. Then after his position was gone, the mestiza and the Indian disappeared and with

great effort he forced before himself the image of a widow, of course an agreeable widow! So when he saw his dream take shape in part he became sad, but with a certain touch of native philosophy said to himself, “Those were all dreams and in this world one does not live on dreams!” Thus he dispelled his doubts: she used rice-powder, but after their marriage he would break her of the habit; her face had many wrinkles, but his coat was torn and patched; she was a pretentious old woman, domineering and mannish, but hunger was more terrible, more domineering and pretentious still, and anyway, he had been blessed with a mild disposition for that very end, and love softens the character. She spoke Spanish badly, but he himself did not talk it well, as he had been told when notified of his dismissal Moreover, what did it matter to him if she was an ugly and ridiculous old woman? He was lame, toothless, and bald! Don Tiburcio preferred to take charge of her rather than to become a public charge from hunger. When some [331]friends joked with him about it, he answered, “Give me bread and call me a fool.”

Don Tiburcio was one of those men who are popularly spoken of as unwilling to harm a fly. Modest, incapable of harboring an unkind thought, in bygone days he would have been made a missionary. His stay in the country had not given him the conviction of grand superiority, of great valor, and of elevated importance that the greater part of his countrymen acquire in a few weeks. His heart had never been capable of entertaining hate nor had he been able to find a single filibuster; he saw only unhappy wretches whom he must despoil if he did not wish to be more unhappy than they were. When he was threatened with prosecution for passing himself off as a physician he was not resentful nor did he complain. Recognizing the justness of the charge against him, he merely answered, “But it’s necessary to live!”

So they married, or rather, bagged each other, and went to Santa Ann to spend their honeymoon. But on their wedding-night Doña Victorina was attacked by a horrible indigestion and Don Tiburcio thanked God and showed himself solicitous and attentive. A few days afterward, however, he looked into a mirror and smiled a sad smile as he gazed at his naked gums, for he had aged ten years at least.

Very well satisfied with her husband, Doña Victorina had a fine set of false teeth made for him and called in the best tailors of the city to attend to his

clothing. She ordered carriages, sent to Batangas and Albay for the best ponies, and even obliged him to keep a pair for the races. Nor did she neglect her own person while she was transforming him. She laid aside the native costume for the European and substituted false frizzes for the simple Filipino coiffure, while her gowns, which fitted her marvelously ill, disturbed the peace of all the quiet neighborhood.

Her husband, who never went out on foot,—she did not care to have his lameness noticed,—took her on lonely [332]drives in unfrequented places to her great sorrow, for she wanted to show him off in public, but she kept quiet out of respect for their honeymoon. The last quarter was coming on when he took up the subject of the rice-powder, telling her that the use of it was false and unnatural. Doña Victorina wrinkled up her eyebrows and stared at his false teeth. He became silent, and she understood his weakness. She placed a *de* before her husband's surname, since the *de* cost nothing and gave "quality" to the name, signing herself "Victorina de los Reyes *de* De Espadaña." This *de* was such a mania with her that neither the stationer nor her husband could get it out of her head. "If I write only one *de* it may be thought that you don't have it, you fool!" she said to her husband.6

Soon she believed that she was about to become a mother, so she announced to all her acquaintances, "Next month De Espadaña and I are going to the *Penyinsula*. I don't want our son to be born here and be called a revolutionist." She talked incessantly of the journey, having memorized the names of the different ports of call, so that it was a treat to hear her talk: "I'm going to see the isthmus in the Suez Canal—De Espadaña thinks it very beautiful and De Espadaña has traveled over the whole world." "I'll probably not return to this land of savages." "I wasn't born to live here—Aden or Port Said would suit me better—I've thought so ever since I was a girl." In her geography Doña Victorina divided the world into the Philippines and Spain; rather differently from the clever people who divide it into Spain and America or China for another name.

Her husband realized that these things were barbarisms, but held his peace to escape a scolding or reminders of his stuttering. To increase the illusion of approaching maternity she became whimsical, dressed herself in colors with [333]a profusion of flowers and ribbons, and appeared on the Escolta in a wrapper. But oh, the disenchantment! Three months went by and the

dream faded, and now, having no reason for fearing that her son would be a revolutionist, she gave up the trip. She consulted doctors, midwives, old women, but all in vain. Having to the great displeasure of Capitan Tiago jested about St. Pascual Bailon, she was unwilling to appeal to any saint. For this reason a friend of her husband's remarked to her:
"Believe me, señora, you are the only *strong-spirited* person in this tiresome country."

She had smiled, without knowing what *strong-spirited* meant, but that night she asked her husband. "My dear," he answered, "the s-strongest s-spirit that I know of is ammonia. My f-friend must have s-spoken f-figuratively."

After that she would say on every possible occasion, "I'm the only ammonia in this tiresome country, speaking figuratively. So Señor N. de N., a Peninsular gentleman of quality, told me."

Whatever she said had to be done, for she had succeeded in dominating her husband completely. He on his part did not put up any great resistance and so was converted into a kind of lap-dog of hers. If she was displeased with him she would not let him go out, and when she was really angry she tore out his false teeth, thus leaving him a horrible sight for several days.

It soon occurred to her that her husband ought to be a doctor of medicine and surgery, and she so informed him.

"My dear, do you w-want me to be arrested?" he asked fearfully.

"Don't be a fool! Leave me to arrange it," she answered. "You're not going to treat any one, but I want people to call you *Doctor* and me *Doctora*, see?"

So on the following day Rodoreda[7] received an order [334]to engrave on a slab of black marble: DR. DE ESPADAÑA, SPECIALIST IN ALL KINDS OF DISEASES. All the servants had to address them by their new titles, and as a result she increased the number of frizzes, the layers of rice-powder, the ribbons and laces, and gazed with more disdain than ever on her poor and unfortunate countrywomen whose husbands belonged to a lower grade of society than hers did. Day by day she felt more dignified and exalted and, by continuing in this way, at the end of a year she would have believed herself to be of divine origin.

These sublime thoughts, however, did not keep her from becoming older and more ridiculous every day. Every time Capitan Tiago saw her and recalled having made love to her in vain he forthwith sent a peso to the church for a mass of thanksgiving. Still, he greatly respected her husband on account of his title of specialist in all kinds of diseases and listened attentively to the few phrases that he was able to stutter out. For this reason and because this doctor was more exclusive than others, Capitan Tiago had selected him to treat his daughter.

In regard to young Linares, that is another matter. When arranging for the trip to Spain, Doña Victorina had thought of having a Peninsular administrator, as she did not trust the Filipinos. Her husband bethought himself of a nephew of his in Madrid who was studying law and who was considered the brightest of the family. So they wrote to him, paying his passage in advance, and when the dream disappeared he was already on his way.

Such were the three persons who had just arrived. While they were partaking of a late breakfast, Padre Salvi came in. The Espadañas were already acquainted with him, and they introduced the blushing young Linares with all his titles.

As was natural, they talked of Maria Clara, who was resting and sleeping. They talked of their journey, and Doña Victorina exhibited all her verbosity in criticising the customs of the provincials,—their nipa houses, their [335]bamboo bridges; without forgetting to mention to the curate her intimacy with this and that high official and other persons of "quality" who were very fond of her.

"If you had come two days ago, Doña Victorina," put in Capitan Tiago during a slight pause, "you would have met his Excellency, the Captain-General. He sat right there."

"What! How's that? His Excellency here! In your house? No!"

"I tell you that he sat right there. If you had only come two days ago—"

"Ah, what a pity that Clarita did not get sick sooner!" she exclaimed with real feeling. Then turning to Linares, "Do you hear, cousin? His Excellency was here! Don't you see now that De Espadaña was right when he told you that you weren't going to the house of a miserable Indian? Because, you

know, Don Santiago, in Madrid our cousin was the friend of ministers and dukes and dined in the house of Count El Campanario."

"The Duke of La Torte, Victorina," corrected her husband.[8]

"It's the same thing. If you will tell me—"

"Shall I find Padre Damaso in his town?" interrupted Linares, addressing Padre Salvi. "I've been told that it's near here."

"He's right here and will be over in a little while," replied the curate.

"How glad I am of that! I have a letter to him," exclaimed the youth, "and if it were not for the happy chance that brings me here, I would have come expressly to visit him."

In the meantime the *happy* chance had awakened.

"De Espadaña," said Doña Victorina, when the meal was over, "shall we go in to see Clarita?" Then to Capitan Tiago, "Only for you, Don Santiago, only for [336]you! My husband only attends persons of quality, and yet, and yet—! He's not like those here. In Madrid he only visited persons of quality."

They adjourned to the sick girl's chamber. The windows were closed from fear of a draught, so the room was almost dark, being only dimly illuminated by two tapers which burned before an image of the Virgin of Antipolo. Her head covered with a handkerchief saturated in cologne, her body wrapped carefully in white sheets which swathed her youthful form with many folds, under curtains of jusi and piña, the girl lay on her kamagon bed. Her hair formed a frame around her oval countenance and accentuated her transparent paleness, which was enlivened only by her large, sad eyes. At her side were her two friends and Andeng with a bouquet of tuberoses.

De Espadaña felt her pulse, examined her tongue, asked a few questions, and said, as he wagged his head from side to side, "S-she's s-sick, but s-she c-can be c-cured." Doña Victorina looked proudly at the bystanders.

"Lichen with milk in the morning, syrup of marshmallow, two cynoglossum pills!" ordered De Espadaña.

“Cheer up, Clarita!” said Doña Victorina, going up to her. “We’ve come to cure you. I want to introduce our cousin.”

Linares was so absorbed in the contemplation of those eloquent eyes, which seemed to be searching for some one, that he did not hear Doña Victorina name him.

“Señor Linares,” said the curate, calling him out of his abstraction, “here comes Padre Damaso.”

It was indeed Padre Damaso, but pale and rather sad. On leaving his bed his first visit was for Maria Clara. Nor was it the Padre Damaso of former times, hearty and self-confident; now he moved silently and with some hesitation.[337]

1A similar incident occurred in Kalamba.—*Author’s note*.

2“The Maid of Saragossa,” noted for her heroic exploits during the siege of that city by the French in 1808–09.—TR.

3A region in southwestern Spain, including the provinces of Badajoz and Caceres.—TR.

4Author of a little book of fables in Castilian verse for the use of schools. The fable of the young philosopher illustrates the thought in Pope’s well-known lines:

> “Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,
> As to be hated needs but to be seen;
> Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,
> We first endure, then pity, then embrace.”

—TR.

5Bones for those who come late.

6According to Spanish custom, a matron is known by prefixing her maiden name with *de* (possessive *of*) to her husband’s name.—TR.

7The marble-shop of Rodoreda is still in existence on Calle Carriedo, Santa Cruz.—TR.

8There is a play on words here, *Campanario* meaning belfry and *Torre* tower.—TR.

[Contents]

Chapter XLIII
Plans

Without heeding any of the bystanders, Padre Damaso went directly to the bed of the sick girl and taking her hand said to her with ineffable tenderness, while tears sprang into his eyes, “Maria, my daughter, you mustn’t die!”

The sick girl opened her eyes and stared at him with a strange expression. No one who knew the Franciscan had suspected in him such tender feelings, no one had believed that under his rude and rough exterior there might beat a heart. Unable to go on, he withdrew from the girl’s side, weeping like a child, and went outside under the favorite vines of Maria Clara’s balcony to give free rein to his grief.

“How he loves his goddaughter!” thought all present, while Fray Salvi gazed at him motionlessly and in silence, lightly gnawing his lips the while.

When he had become somewhat calm again Doña Victorina introduced Linares, who approached him respectfully. Fray Damaso silently looked him over from head to foot, took the letter offered and read it, but apparently without understanding, for he asked, “And who are you?”

“Alfonso Linares, the godson of your brother-in-law,” stammered the young man.

Padre Damaso threw back his body and looked the youth over again carefully. Then his features lighted up and he arose. “So you are the godson of Carlicos!” he exclaimed. “Come and let me embrace you! I got your letter several days ago. So it’s you! I didn’t recognize [338]you,—which is easily explained, for you weren’t born when I left the country,—I didn’t recognize you!” Padre Damaso squeezed his robust arms about the young man, who became very red, whether from modesty or lack of breath is not known.

After the first moments of effusion had passed and inquiries about Carlicos and his wife had been made and answered, Padre Damaso asked, “Come now, what does Carlicos want me to do for you?”

“I believe he says something about that in the letter,” Linares again stammered.

“In the letter? Let’s see! That’s right! He wants me to get you a job and a wife. Ahem! A job, a job that’s easy! Can you read and write?”

“I received my degree of law from the University.”

“*Carambas!* So you’re a pettifogger! You don’t show it; you look more like a shy maiden. So much the better! But to get you a wife—”

“Padre, I’m not in such a great hurry,” interrupted Linares in confusion.

But Padre Damaso was already pacing from one end of the hallway to the other, muttering, “A wife, a wife!” His countenance was no longer sad or merry but now wore an expression of great seriousness, while he seemed to be thinking deeply. Padre Salvi gazed on the scene from a distance.

“I didn’t think that the matter would trouble me so much,” murmured Padre Damaso in a tearful voice. “But of two evils, the lesser!” Then raising his voice he approached Linares and said to him, “Come, boy, let’s talk to Santiago.”

Linares turned pale and allowed himself to be dragged along by the priest, who moved thoughtfully. Then it was Padre Salvi’s turn to pace back and forth, pensive as ever.

A voice wishing him good morning drew him from his monotonous walk. He raised his head and saw Lucas, who saluted him humbly.

[339]“What do you want?” questioned the curate’s eyes.
“Padre, I’m the brother of the man who was killed on the day of the fiesta,” began Lucas in tearful accents.

The curate recoiled and murmured in a scarcely audible voice, “Well?”

Lucas made an effort to weep and wiped his eyes with a handkerchief. “Padre,” he went on tearfully, “I’ve been to Don Crisostomo to ask for an indemnity. First he received me with kicks, saying that he wouldn’t pay anything since he himself had run the risk of getting killed through the fault of my dear, unfortunate brother. I went to talk to him yesterday, but he had gone to Manila. He left me five hundred pesos for charity’s sake and

charged me not to come back again. Ah, Padre, five hundred pesos for my poor brother—five hundred pesos! Ah, Padre—"

At first the curate had listened with surprise and attention while his lips curled slightly with a smile of such disdain and sarcasm at the sight of this farce that, had Lucas noticed it, he would have run away at top speed. "Now what do you want?" he asked, turning away.

"Ah, Padre, tell me for the love of God what I ought to do. The padre has always given good advice."

"Who told you so? You don't belong in these parts."

"The padre is known all over the province."

With irritated looks Padre Salvi approached him and pointing to the street said to the now startled Lucas, "Go home and be thankful that Don Crisostomo didn't have you sent to jail! Get out of here!"

Lucas forgot the part he was playing and murmured, "But I thought—"

"Get out of here!" cried Padre Salvi nervously.

"I would like to see Padre Damaso."

"Padre Damaso is busy. Get out of here!" again ordered the curate imperiously.

Lucas went down the stairway muttering, "He's another of them—as he doesn't pay well—the one who pays best!"

[340]At the sound of the curate's voice all had hurried to the spot, including Padre Damaso, Capitan Tiago, and Linares.
"An insolent vagabond who came to beg and who doesn't want to work," explained Padre Salvi, picking up his hat and cane to return to the convento.
[341]
[Contents]

Chapter XLIV
An Examination of Conscience

Long days and weary nights passed at the sick girl's bed. After having confessed herself, Maria Clara had suffered a relapse, and in her delirium she uttered only the name of the mother whom she had never known. But her girl friends, her father, and her aunt kept watch at her side. Offerings and alms were sent to all the miraculous images, Capitan Tiago vowed a gold cane to the Virgin of Antipolo, and at length the fever began to subside slowly and regularly.

Doctor De Espadaña was astonished at the virtues of the syrup of marshmallow and the infusion of lichen, prescriptions that he had not varied. Doña Victorina was so pleased with her husband that one day when he stepped on the train of her gown she did not apply her penal code to the extent of taking his set of false teeth away from him, but contented herself with merely exclaiming, "If you weren't lame you'd even step on my corset!"—an article of apparel she did not wear.

One afternoon while Sinang and Victoria were visiting their friend, the curate, Capitan Tiago, and Doña Victorina's family were conversing over their lunch in the dining-room.

"Well, I feel very sorry about it," said the doctor; "Padre Damaso also will regret it very much."

"Where do you say they're transferring him to?" Linares asked the curate.

"To the province of Tayabas," replied the curate negligently.

"One who will be greatly affected by it is Maria Clara, [342]when she learns of it," said Capitan Tiago. "She loves him like a father."
Fray Salvi looked at him askance.

"I believe, Padre," continued Capitan Tiago, "that all her illness is the result of the trouble on the last day of the fiesta."

"I'm of the same opinion, and think that you've done well not to let Señor Ibarra see her. She would have got worse.

“If it wasn’t for us,” put in Doña Victorina, “Clarita would already be in heaven singing praises to God.”

“Amen!” Capitan Tiago thought it his duty to exclaim. “It’s lucky for you that my husband didn’t have any patient of greater quality, for then you’d have had to call in another, and all those here are ignoramuses. My husband —”

“Just as I was saying,” the curate in turn interrupted, “I think that the confession that Maria Clara made brought on the favorable crisis which has saved her life. A clean conscience is worth more than a lot of medicine. Don’t think that I deny the power of science, above all, that of surgery, but a clean conscience! Read the pious books and you’ll see how many cures are effected merely by a clean confession.”

“Pardon me,” objected the piqued Doña Victorina, “this power of the confessional—cure the alferez’s woman with a confession!”

“A wound, madam, is not a form of illness which the conscience can affect,” replied Padre Salvi severely. “Nevertheless, a clean confession will preserve her from receiving in the future such blows as she got this morning.”

“She deserves them!” went on Doña Victorina as if she had not heard what Padre Salvi said. “That woman is so insolent! In the church she did nothing but stare at me. You can see that she’s a nobody. Sunday I was going to ask her if she saw anything funny about my face, [343]but who would lower oneself to speak to people that are not of rank?”

The curate, on his part, continued just as though he had not heard this tirade. “Believe me, Don Santiago, to complete your daughter’s recovery it’s necessary that she take communion tomorrow. I’ll bring the viaticum over here. I don’t think she has anything to confess, but yet, if she wants to confess herself tonight—”

“I don’t know,” Doña Victorina instantly took advantage of a slight hesitation on Padre Salvi’s part to add, “I don’t understand how there can be men capable of marrying such a fright as that woman is. It’s easily seen where she comes from. She’s just dying of envy, you can see it! How much does an alferez get?”

“Accordingly, Don Santiago, tell your cousin to prepare the sick girl for the communion tomorrow. I’ll come over tonight to absolve her of her peccadillos.”

Seeing Aunt Isabel come from the sick-room, he said to her in Tagalog, “Prepare your niece for confession tonight. Tomorrow I’ll bring over the viaticum. With that she’ll improve faster.”

“But, Padre,” Linares gathered up enough courage to ask faintly, “you don’t think that she’s in any danger of dying?”

“Don’t you worry,” answered the padre without looking at him. “I know what I’m doing; I’ve helped take care of plenty of sick people before. Besides, she’ll decide herself whether or not she wishes to receive the holy communion and you’ll see that she says yes.”

Capitan Tiago immediately agreed to everything, while Aunt Isabel returned to the sick girl’s chamber. Maria Clara was still in bed, pale, very pale, and at her side were her two friends.

“Take one more grain,” Sinang whispered, as she offered her a white tablet that she took from a small glass tube. “He says that when you feel a rumbling or buzzing in your ears you are to stop the medicine.”

[344]“Hasn’t he written to you again?” asked the sick girl in a low voice.
“No, he must be very busy.”

“Hasn’t he sent any message?”

“He says nothing more than that he’s going to try to get the Archbishop to absolve him from the excommunication, so that—”

This conversation was suspended at the aunt’s approach. “The padre says for you to get ready for confession, daughter,” said the latter. “You girls must leave her so that she can make her examination of conscience.”

“But it hasn’t been a week since she confessed!” protested Sinang. “I’m not sick and I don’t sin as often as that.”

“Abá! Don’t you know what the curate says: the righteous sin seven times a day? Come, what book shall I bring you, the *Ancora*, the*Ramillete*, or the *Camino Recto para ir al Cielo?*”

Maria Clara did not answer.

“Well, you mustn’t tire yourself,” added the good aunt to console her. “I’ll read the examination myself and you’ll have only to recall your sins.”

“Write to him not to think of me any more,” murmured Maria Clara in Sinang’s ear as the latter said good-by to her.

“What?”

But the aunt again approached, and Sinang had to go away without understanding what her friend had meant. The good old aunt drew a chair up to the light, put her spectacles on the end of her nose, and opened a booklet. “Pay close attention, daughter. I’m going to begin with the Ten Commandments. I’ll go slow so that you can meditate. If you don’t hear well tell me so that I can repeat. You know that in looking after your welfare I’m never weary.”

She began to read in a monotonous and snuffling voice the considerations of cases of sinfulness. At the end of [345]each paragraph she made a long pause in order to give the girl time to recall her sins and to repent of them. Maria Clara stared vaguely into space. After finishing the first commandment, *to love God above all things*, Aunt Isabel looked at her over her spectacles and was satisfied with her sad and thoughtful mien. She coughed piously and after a long pause began to read the second commandment. The good old woman read with unction and when she had finished the commentaries looked again at her niece, who turned her head slowly to the other side.

“Bah!” said Aunt Isabel to herself. “With taking His holy name in vain the poor child has nothing to do. Let’s pass on to the third.”[1]

The third commandment was analyzed and commented upon. After citing all the cases in which one can break it she again looked toward the bed. But now she lifted up her glasses and rubbed her eyes, for she had seen her niece raise a handkerchief to her face as if to wipe away tears.

“Hum, ahem! The poor child once went to sleep during the sermon.” Then replacing her glasses on the end of her nose, she said, “Now let’s see if, just

as you've failed to keep holy the Sabbath, you've failed to honor your father and mother."

So she read the fourth commandment in an even slower and more snuffling voice, thinking thus to give solemnity to the act, just as she had seen many friars do. Aunt Isabel had never heard a Quaker preach or she would also have trembled.

The sick girl, in the meantime, raised the handkerchief to her eyes several times and her breathing became more noticeable.

"What a good soul!" thought the old woman. "She who is so obedient and submissive to every one! I've committed more sins and yet I've never been able really to cry."

[346]She then began the fifth commandment with greater pauses and even more pronounced snuffling, if that were possible, and with such great enthusiasm that she did not hear the stifled sobs of her niece. Only in a pause which she made after the comments on homicide, by violence did she notice the groans of the sinner. Then her tone passed into the sublime as she read the rest of the commandment in accents that she tried to reader threatening, seeing that her niece was still weeping.
"Weep, daughter, weep!" she said, approaching the bed. "The more you weep the sooner God will pardon you. Hold the sorrow of repentance as better than that of mere penitence. Weep, daughter, weep! You don't know how much I enjoy seeing you weep. Beat yourself on the breast also, but not hard, for you're still sick."

But, as if her sorrow needed mystery and solitude to make it increase, Maria Clara, on seeing herself observed, little by little stopped sighing and dried her eyes without saying anything or answering her aunt, who continued the reading. Since the wails of her audience had ceased, however, she lost her enthusiasm, and the last commandments made her so sleepy that she began to yawn, with great detriment to her snuffling, which was thus interrupted.

"If I hadn't seen it with my own eyes, I wouldn't have believed it," thought the good old lady afterwards. "This girl sins like a soldier against the first five and from the sixth to the tenth not a venial sin, just the opposite to us! How the world does move now!"

So she lighted a large candle to the Virgin of Antipolo and two other smaller ones to Our Lady of the Rosary and Our Lady of the Pillar,[2] taking care to put away in a corner a marble crucifix to make it understand that the candles were not lighted for it. Nor did the Virgin of Delaroche have any share; she was an unknown foreigner, and Aunt Isabel had never heard of any miracle of hers.

[347]We do not know what occurred during the confession that night and we respect such secrets. But the confession was a long one and the aunt, who stood watch over her niece at a distance, could note that the curate, instead of turning his ear to hear the words of the sick girl, rather had his face turned toward hers, and seemed only to be trying to read, or divine, her thoughts by gazing into her beautiful eyes.

Pale and with contracted lips Padre Salvi left the chamber. Looking at his forehead, which was gloomy and covered with perspiration, one would have said that it was he who had confessed and had not obtained absolution.

"*Jesús, María, y José!*" exclaimed Aunt Isabel, crossing herself to dispel an evil thought, "who understands the girls nowadays?"[348]

1The Roman Catholic decalogue does not contain the commandment forbidding the worship of "graven images," its second being the prohibition against "taking His holy name in vain." To make up the ten, the commandment against covetousness is divided into two.—TR.

2The famous Virgin of Saragossa, Spain, and patroness of Santa Cruz, Manila.—TR.

[Contents]

Chapter XLV
The Hunted

In the dim light shed by the moonbeams sifting through the thick foliage a man wandered through the forest with slow and cautious steps. From time to time, as if to find his way, he whistled a peculiar melody, which was answered in the distance by some one whistling the same air. The man would listen attentively and then make his way in the direction of the distant sound, until at length, after overcoming the thousand obstacles offered by the virgin forest in the night-time, he reached a small open space, which was bathed in the light of the moon in its first quarter. The high, tree-crowned rocks that rose about formed a kind of ruined amphitheater, in the center of which were scattered recently felled trees and charred logs among boulders covered with nature's mantle of verdure.

Scarcely had the unknown arrived when another figure started suddenly from behind a large rock and advanced with drawn revolver. "Who are you?" he asked in Tagalog in an imperious tone, cocking the weapon.

"Is old Pablo among you?" inquired the unknown in an even tone, without answering the question or showing any signs of fear.

"You mean the capitan? Yes, he's here."

"Then tell him that Elias is here looking for him," was the answer of the unknown, who was no other than the mysterious pilot.

"Are you Elias?" asked the other respectfully, as he approached him, not, however, ceasing to cover him with the revolver. "Then come!"

Elias followed him, and they penetrated into a kind of [349]cave sunk down in the depths of the earth. The guide, who seemed to be familiar with the way, warned the pilot when he should descend or turn aside or stoop down, so they were not long in reaching a kind of hall which was poorly lighted by pitch torches and occupied by twelve to fifteen armed men with dirty faces and soiled clothing, some seated and some lying down as they talked fitfully to one another. Resting his arms on a stone that served for a table and gazing thoughtfully at the torches, which gave out so little light for so much smoke, was seen an old, sad-featured man with his head wrapped in a

bloody bandage. Did we not know that it was a den of tulisanes we might have said, on reading the look of desperation in the old man's face, that it was the Tower of Hunger on the eve before Ugolino devoured his sons.
Upon the arrival of Elias and his guide the figures partly rose, but at a signal from the latter they settled back again, satisfying themselves with the observation that the newcomer was unarmed. The old man turned his head slowly and saw the quiet figure of Elias, who stood uncovered, gazing at him with sad interest.

"It's you at last," murmured the old man, his gaze lighting up somewhat as he recognized the youth.

"In what condition do I find you!" exclaimed the youth in a suppressed tone, shaking his head.

The old man dropped his head in silence and made a sign to the others, who arose and withdrew, first taking the measure of the pilot's muscles and stature with a glance.

"Yes!" said the old man to Elias as soon as they were alone. "Six months ago when I sheltered you in my house, it was I who pitied you. Now we have changed parts and it is you who pity me. But sit down and tell me how you got here."

"It's fifteen days now since I was told of your misfortune," began the young man slowly in a low voice as he stared at the light. "I started at once and have been [350]seeking you from mountain to mountain. I've traveled over nearly the whole of two provinces."
"In order not to shed innocent blood," continued the old man, "I have had to flee. My enemies were afraid to show themselves. I was confronted merely with some unfortunates who have never done me the least harm."

After a brief pause during which he seemed to be occupied in trying to read the thoughts in the dark countenance of the old man, Elias replied: "I've come to make a proposition to you. Having sought in vain for some survivor of the family that caused the misfortunes of mine, I've decided to leave the province where I live and move toward the North among the independent pagan tribes. Don't you want to abandon the life you have entered upon and come with me? I will be your son, since you have lost your own; I have no family, and in you will find a father."

The old man shook his, head in negation, saying, “When one at my age makes a desperate resolution, it’s because there is no other recourse. A man who, like myself, has spent his youth and his mature years toiling for the future of himself and his sons; a man who has been submissive to every wish of his superiors, who has conscientiously performed difficult tasks, enduring all that he might live in peace and quiet—when that man, whose blood time has chilled, renounces all his past and foregoes all his future, even on the very brink of the grave, it is because he has with mature judgment decided that peace does not exist and that it is not the highest good. Why drag out miserable days on foreign soil? I had two sons, a daughter, a home, a fortune, I was esteemed and respected; now I am as a tree shorn of its branches, a wanderer, a fugitive, hunted like a wild beast through the forest, and all for what? Because a man dishonored my daughter, because her brothers called that man’s infamy to account, and because that man is set above his fellows with the title of minister of God! In spite of everything, I, her father, [351]I, dishonored in my old age, forgave the injury, for I was indulgent with the passions of youth and the weakness of the flesh, and in the face of irreparable wrong what could I do but hold my peace and save what remained to me? But the culprit, fearful of vengeance sooner or later, sought the destruction of my sons. Do you know what he did? No? You don’t know, then, that he pretended that there had been a robbery committed in the convento and that one of my sons figured among the accused? The other could not be included because he was in another place at the time. Do you know what tortures they were subjected to? You know of them, for they are the same in all the towns! I, I saw my son hanging by the hair, I heard his cries, I heard him call upon me, and I, coward and lover of peace, hadn’t the courage either to kill or to die! Do you know that the theft was not proved, that it was shown to be a false charge, and that in punishment the curate was transferred to another town, but that my son died as a result of his tortures? The other, the one who was left to me, was not a coward like his father, so our persecutor was still fearful that he would wreak vengeance on him, and, under the pretext of his not having his cedula,[1] which he had not carried with him just at that time, had him arrested by the Civil Guard, mistreated him, enraged and harassed him with insults until he was driven to suicide! And I, I have outlived so much shame; but if I had not the courage of a father to defend my sons, there yet remains to me a heart burning for revenge, and I will have it! The

discontented are gathering under my command, my enemies increase my forces, and on the day that I feel myself strong enough I will descend to the lowlands [352]and in flames sate my vengeance and end my own existence. And that day will come or there is no God!"[2]

The old man arose trembling. With fiery look and hollow voice, he added, tearing his long hair, "Curses, curses upon me that I restrained the avenging hands of my sons—I have murdered them! Had I let the guilty perish, had I confided less in the justice of God and men, I should now have my sons—fugitives, perhaps, but I should have them; they would not have died under torture! I was not born to be a father, so I have them not! Curses upon me that I had not learned with my years to know the conditions under which I lived! But in fire and blood by my own death I will avenge them!"

In his paroxysm of grief the unfortunate father tore away the bandage, reopening a wound in his forehead from which gushed a stream of blood.

"I respect your sorrow," said Elias, "and I understand your desire for revenge. I, too, am like you, and yet from fear of injuring the innocent I prefer to forget my misfortunes."

"You can forget because you are young and because you haven't lost a son, your last hope! But I assure you that I shall injure no innocent one. Do you see this wound? Rather than kill a poor cuadrillero, who was doing his duty, I let him inflict it."

"But look," urged Elias, after a moment's silence, "look what a frightful catastrophe you are going to bring down upon our unfortunate people. If you accomplish your revenge by your own hand, your enemies will make terrible reprisals, not against you, not against those who are armed, but against the peaceful, who as usual will be accused—and then the eases of injustice!"

"Let the people learn to defend themselves, let each one defend himself!"

[353]"You know that that is impossible. Sir, I knew you in other days when you were happy; then you gave me good advice, will you now permit me —"

The old man folded his arms in an attitude of attention. "Sir," continued Elias, weighing his words well, "I have had the good fortune to render a service to a young man who is rich, generous, noble, and who desires the

welfare of his country. They say that this young man has friends in Madrid —I don't know myself—but I can assure you that he is a friend of the Captain-General's. What do you say that we make him the bearer of the people's complaints, if we interest him in the cause of the unhappy?"

The old man shook his head. "You say that he is rich? The rich think only of increasing their wealth, pride and show blind them, and as they are generally safe, above all when they have powerful friends, none of them troubles himself about the woes of the unfortunate. I know all, because I was rich!"

"But the man of whom I speak is not like the others. He is a son who has been insulted over the memory of his father, and a young man who, as he is soon to have a family, thinks of the future, of a happy future for his children."

"Then he is a man who is going to be happy—our cause is not for happy men."

"But it is for men who have feelings!"

"Perhaps!" replied the old man, seating himself. "Suppose that he agrees to carry our cry even to the Captain-General, suppose that he finds in the Cortes[3] delegates who will plead for us; do you think that we shall get justice?"

"Let us try it before we resort to violent measure," answered Elias. "You must be surprised that I, another unfortunate, young and strong, should propose to you, old and weak, peaceful measures, but it's because I've seen [354]as much misery caused by us as by the tyrants. The defenseless are the ones who pay."
"And if we accomplish nothing?"

"Something we shall accomplish, believe me, for all those who are in power are not unjust. But if we accomplish nothing, if they disregard our entreaties, if man has become deaf to the cry of sorrow from his kind, then I will put myself under your orders!"

The old man embraced the youth enthusiastically. "I accept your proposition, Elias. I know that you will keep your word. You will come to

me, and I shall help you to revenge your ancestors, you will help me to revenge my sons, my sons that were like you!”

“In the meantime, sir, you will refrain from violent measures?”

“You will present the complaints of the people, you know them. When shall I know your answer?”

“In four days send a man to the beach at San Diego and I will tell him what I shall have learned from the person in whom I place so much hope. If he accepts, they will give us justice; and if not, I’ll be the first to fall in the struggle that we will begin.”

“Elias will not die, Elias will be the leader when Capitan Pablo fails, satisfied in his revenge,” concluded the old man, as he accompanied the youth out of the cave into the open air.[355]

1In 1883 the old system of “tribute” was abolished and in its place a graduated personal tax imposed. The certificate that this tax had been paid, known as the*cédula personal*, which also served for personal identification, could be required at any time or place, and failure to produce it was cause for summary arrest. It therefore became, in unscrupulous hands, a fruitful source of abuse, since any “undesirable” against whom no specific charge could be brought might be put out of the way by this means.—TR.

2Tanawan or Pateros?—*Author’s note*. The former is a town in Batangas Province, the latter a village on the northern shore of the Lake of Bay, in what is now Rizal Province.—TR.

3The Spanish Parliament.—TR.

[Contents]

Chapter XLVI
The Cockpit

To keep holy the afternoon of the Sabbath one generally goes to the cockpit in the Philippines, just as to the bull-fights in Spain. Cockfighting, a passion introduced into the country and exploited for a century past, is one of the vices of the people, more widely spread than opium-smoking among the Chinese. There the poor man goes to risk all that he has, desirous of getting rich without work. There the rich man goes to amuse himself, using the money that remains to him from his feasts and his masses of thanksgiving. The fortune that he gambles is his own, the cock is raised with much more care perhaps than his son and successor in the cockpit, so we have nothing to say against it. Since the government permits it and even in a way recommends it, by providing that the spectacle may take place only in the *public plazas*, on *holidays* (in order that all may see it and be encouraged by the example?), *from the high mass until nightfall (eight* hours), let us proceed thither to seek out some of our acquaintances.

The cockpit of San Diego does not differ from those to be found in other towns, except in some details. It consists of three parts, the first of which, the entrance, is a large rectangle some twenty meters long by fourteen wide. On one side is the gateway, generally tended by an old woman whose business it is to collect the *sa pintu*, or admission fee. Of this contribution, which every one pays, the government receives a part, amounting to some hundreds of thousands of pesos a year. It is said that with this money, with which vice pays its license, magnificent [356]schoolhouses are erected, bridges and roads are constructed, prizes for encouraging agriculture and commerce are distributed: blessed be the vice that produces such good results! In this first enclosure are the vendors of buyos, cigars, sweetmeats, and foodstuffs. There swarm the boys in company with their fathers or uncles, who carefully initiate them into the secrets of life.

This enclosure communicates with another of somewhat larger dimensions, —a kind of foyer where the public gathers while waiting for the combats. There are the greater part of the fighting-cocks tied with cords which are fastened to the ground by means of a piece of bone or hard wood; there are assembled the gamblers, the devotees, those skilled in tying on the gaffs, there they make agreements, they deliberate, they beg for loans, they curse,

they swear, they laugh boisterously. That one fondles his chicken, rubbing his hand over its brilliant plumage, this one examines and counts the scales on its legs, they recount the exploits of the champions.

There you will see many with mournful faces carrying by the feet corpses picked of their feathers; the creature that was the favorite for months, petted and cared for day and night, on which were founded such flattering hopes, is now nothing more than a carcass to be sold for a peseta or to be stewed with ginger and eaten that very night. *Sic transit gloria mundi!* The loser returns to the home where his anxious wife and ragged children await him, without his money or his chicken. Of all that golden dream, of all those vigils during months from the dawn of day to the setting of the sun, of all those fatigues and labors, there results only a peseta, the ashes left from so much smoke.

In this foyer even the least intelligent takes part in the discussion, while the man of most hasty judgment conscientiously investigates the matter, weighs, examines, extends the wings, feels the muscles of the cocks. Some go very well-dressed, surrounded and followed by the partisans [357]of their champions; others who are dirty and bear the imprint of vice on their squalid features anxiously follow the movements of the rich to note the bets, since the purse may become empty but the passion never satiated. No countenance here but is animated—not here is to be found the indolent, apathetic, silent Filipino—all is movement, passion, eagerness. It may be, one would say, that they have that thirst which is quickened by the water of the swamp.

From this place one passes into the arena, which is known as the *Rueda*, the wheel. The ground here, surrounded by bamboo-stakes, is usually higher than that in the two other divisions. In the back part, reaching almost to the roof, are tiers of seats for the spectators, or gamblers, since these are the same. During the fights these seats are filled with men and boys who shout, clamor, sweat, quarrel, and blaspheme—fortunately, hardly any women get in this far. In the *Rueda* are the men of importance, the rich, the famous bettors, the contractor, the referee. On the perfectly leveled ground the cocks fight, and from there Destiny apportions to the families smiles or tears, feast or famine.

At the time of entering we see the gobernadorcillo, Capitan Pablo, Capitan Basilio, and Lucas, the man with the sear on his face who felt so deeply the death of his brother.

Capitan Basilio approaches one of the townsmen and asks, “Do you know which cock Capitan Tiago is going to bring?”

“I don’t know, sir. This morning two came, one of them the *lásak* that whipped the Consul’s *talisain*.”[1]

“Do you think that my *bulik* is a match for it?”

“I should say so! I’ll bet my house and my camisa on it!”

At that moment Capitan Tiago arrives, dressed like the heavy gamblers, in a camisa of Canton linen, woolen pantaloons, [358]and a wide straw hat. Behind him come two servants carrying the *lásak* and a white cock of enormous size.

“Sinang tells me that Maria is improving all the time,” says Capitan Basilio.

“She has no more fever but is still very weak.”

“Did you lose last night?”

“A little. I hear that you won. I’m going to see if I can’t get even here.”

“Do you want to fight the *lásak?*” asks Capitan Basilio, looking at the cock and taking it from the servant. “That depends—if there’s a bet.”

“How much will you put up?”

“I won’t gamble for less than two.”

“Have you seen my *bulik?*” inquires Capitan Basilio, calling to a man who is carrying a small game-cock.

Capitan Tiago examines it and after feeling its weight and studying its scales returns it with the question, “How much will you put up?”

“Whatever you will.”

“Two, and five hundred?”

“Three?”

“Three!”

“For the next fight after this!”

The chorus of curious bystanders and the gamblers spread the news that two celebrated cocks will fight, each of which has a history and a well-earned reputation. All wish to see and examine the two celebrities, opinions are offered, prophecies are made.

Meanwhile, the murmur of the voices grows, the confusion increases, the *Rueda* is broken into, the seats are filled. The skilled attendants carry the two cocks into the arena, a white and a red, already armed but with the gaffs still sheathed. Cries are heard, “On the white!” “On the white!” while some other voice answers, “On the red!” The odds are on the white, he is the favorite; the red is the “outsider,” the *dejado*.

[359]Members of the Civil Guard move about in the crowd. They are not dressed in the uniform of that meritorious corps, but neither are they in civilian costume. Trousers of *guingón* with a red stripe, a camisa stained blue from the faded blouse, and a service-cap, make up their costume, in keeping with their deportment; they make bets and keep watch, they raise disturbances and talk of keeping the peace.
While the spectators are yelling, waving their hands, flourishing and clinking pieces of silver; while they search in their pockets for the last coin, or, in the lack of such, try to pledge their word, promising to sell the carabao or the next crop, two boys, brothers apparently, follow the bettors with wistful eyes, loiter about, murmur timid words to which no one listens, become more and more gloomy and gaze at one another ill-humoredly and dejectedly. Lucas watches them covertly, smiles malignantly, jingles his silver, passes close to them, and gazing into the *Rueda*, cries out:

“Fifty, fifty to twenty on the white!”

The two brothers exchange glances.

“I told you,” muttered the elder, “that you shouldn’t have put up all the money. If you had listened to me we should now have something to bet on the red.”

The younger timidly approached Lucas and touched him on the arm.

“Oh, it’s you!” exclaimed the latter, turning around with feigned surprise. “Does your brother accept my proposition or do you want to bet?”

“How can we bet when we’ve lost everything?”

“Then you accept?”

“He doesn’t want to! If you would lend us something, now that you say you know us—”

Lucas scratched his head, pulled at his camisa, and replied, “Yes, I know you. You are Tarsilo and Bruno, both young and strong. I know that your brave father died as a result of the hundred lashes a day those soldiers [360]gave him. I know that you don’t think of revenging him.”
“Don’t meddle in our affairs!” broke in Tarsilo, the elder. “That might lead to trouble. If it were not that we have a sister, we should have been hanged long ago.”

“Hanged? They only hang a coward, one who has no money or influence. And at all events the mountains are near.”

“A hundred to twenty on the white!” cried a passer-by.

“Lend us four pesos, three, two,” begged the younger.

“We’ll soon pay them back double. The fight is going to commence.”

Lucas again scratched his head. “Tush! This money isn’t mine. Don Crisostomo has given it to me for those who are willing to serve him. But I see that you’re not like your father—he was really brave—let him who is not so not seek amusement!” So saying, he drew away from them a little.

“Let’s take him up, what’s the difference?” said Bruno. “It’s the same to be shot as to be hanged. We poor folks are good for nothing else.”

“You’re right—but think of our sister!”

Meanwhile, the ring has been cleared and the combat is about to begin. The voices die away as the two starters, with the expert who fastens the gaffs, are left alone in the center. At a signal from the referee, the expert unsheathes the gaffs and the fine blades glitter threateningly.

Sadly and silently the two brothers draw nearer to the ring until their foreheads are pressed against the railing. A man approaches them and calls into their ears, "*Pare*,2 a hundred to ten on the white!"

Tarsilo stares at him in a foolish way and responds to Bruno's nudge with a grunt.

The starters hold the cocks with skilful delicacy, taking care not to wound themselves. A solemn silence reigns; [361]the spectators seem to be changed into hideous wax figures. They present one cock to the other, holding his head down so that the other may peck at it and thus irritate him. Then the other is given a like opportunity, for in every duel there must be fair play, whether it is a question of Parisian cocks or Filipino cocks. Afterwards, they hold them up in sight of each other, close together, so that each of the enraged little creatures may see who it is that has pulled out a feather, and with whom he must fight. Their neck-feathers bristle up as they gaze at each other fixedly with flashes of anger darting from their little round eyes. Now the moment has come; the attendants place them on the ground a short distance apart and leave them a clear field.

Slowly they advance, their footfalls are, audible on the hard ground. No one in the crowd speaks, no one breathes. Raising and lowering their heads as if to gauge one another with a look, the two cocks utter sounds of defiance and contempt. Each sees the bright blade throwing out its cold, bluish reflections. The danger animates them and they rush directly toward each other, but a pace apart they check themselves with fixed gaze and bristling plumage. At that moment their little heads are filled with a rush of blood, their anger flashes forth, and they hurl themselves together with instinctive valor. They strike beak to beak, breast to breast, gaff to gaff, wing to wing, but the blows are skilfully parried, only a few feathers fall. Again they size each other up: suddenly the white rises on his wings, brandishing the deadly knife, but the red has bent his legs and lowered his head, so the white smites only the empty air.. Then on touching the ground the white, fearing a blow from behind, turns quickly to face his adversary. The red attacks him furiously, but he defends himself calmly—not undeservedly is he the favorite of the spectators, all of whom tremulously and anxiously follow the fortunes of the fight, only here and there an involuntary cry being heard.

[362]The ground becomes strewn with red and white feathers dyed in blood, but the contest is not for the first blood; the Filipino, carrying out the laws dictated by his government, wishes it to be to the death or until one or the other turns tail and runs. Blood covers the ground, the blows are more numerous, but victory still hangs in the balance. At last, with a supreme effort, the white throws himself forward for a final stroke, fastens his gaff in the wing of the red and catches it between the bones. But the white himself has been wounded in the breast and both are weak and feeble from loss of blood. Breathless, their strength spent, caught one against the other, they remain motionless until the white, with blood pouring from his beak, falls, kicking his death-throes. The red remains at his side with his wing caught, then slowly doubles up his legs and gently closes his eyes.
Then the referee, in accordance with the rule prescribed by the government, declares the red the winner. A savage yell greets the decision, a yell that is heard over the whole town, even and prolonged. He who hears this from afar then knows that the winner is the one against which the odds were placed, or the joy would not be so lasting. The same happens with the nations: when a small one gains a victory over a large one, it is sung and recounted from age to age.

“You see now!” said Bruno dejectedly to his brother, “if you had listened to me we should now have a hundred pesos. You’re the cause of our being penniless.”

Tarsilo did not answer, but gazed about him as if looking for some one.

“There he is, talking to Pedro,” added Bruno. “He’s giving him money, lots of money!”

True it was that Lucas was counting silver coins into the hand of Sisa’s husband. The two then exchanged some words in secret and separated, apparently satisfied.

“Pedro must have agreed. That’s what it is to be decided,” sighed Bruno.

[363]Tarsilo remained gloomy and thoughtful, wiping away with the cuff of his camisa the perspiration that ran down his forehead.
“Brother,” said Bruno, “I’m going to accept, if you don’t decide. The *law*3 continues, the *lásak* must win and we ought not to lose any

chance. I want to bet on the next fight. What's the difference? We'll revenge our father."

"Wait!" said Tarsilo, as he gazed at him fixedly, eye to eye, while both turned pale. "I'll go with you, you're right. We'll revenge our father." Still, he hesitated, and again wiped away the perspiration.

"What's stopping you?" asked Bruno impatiently.

"Do you know what fight comes next? Is it worth while?"

"If you think that way, no! Haven't you heard? The *bulik* of Capitan Basilio's against Capitan Tiago's *lásak*. According to the *law* the*lásak* must win."

"Ah, the *lásak*! I'd bet on it, too. But let's be sure first."

Bruno made a sign of impatience, but followed his brother, who examined the cock, studied it, meditated and reflected, asked some questions. The poor fellow was in doubt. Bruno gazed at him with nervous anger.

"But don't you see that wide scale he has by the side of his spur? Don't you see those feet? What more do you want? Look at those legs, spread out his wings! And this split scale above this wide one, and this double one?"

Tarsilo did not hear him, but went on examining the cock. The clinking of gold and silver came to his ears. "Now let's look at the*bulik*," he said in a thick voice.

Bruno stamped on the ground and gnashed his teeth, but obeyed. They approached another group where a cock was being prepared for the ring. A gaff was selected, red [364]silk thread for tying it on was waxed and rubbed thoroughly. Tarsilo took in the creature with a gloomily impressive gaze, as if he were not looking at the bird so much as at something in the future. He rubbed his hand across his forehead and said to his brother in a stifled voice, "Are you ready?"
"I? Long ago! Without looking at them!"

"But, our poor sister—"

"*Abá!* Haven't they told you that Don Crisostomo is the leader? Didn't you see him walking with the Captain-General? What risk do we run?"

“And if we get killed?”

“What’s the difference? Our father was flogged to death!”

“You’re right!”

The brothers now sought for Lucas in the different groups. As soon as they saw him Tarsilo stopped. “No! Let’s get out of here! We’re going to ruin ourselves!” he exclaimed.

“Go on if you want to! I’m going to accept!”

“Bruno!”

Unfortunately, a man approached them, saying, “Are you betting? I’m for the *bulik!*” The brothers did not answer.

“I’ll give odds!”

“How much?” asked Bruno.

The man began to count out his pesos. Bruno watched him breathlessly.

“I have two hundred. Fifty to forty!”

“No,” said Bruno resolutely. “Put—”

“All right! Fifty to thirty!”

“Double it if you want to.”

“All right. The *bulik* belongs to my protector and I’ve just won. A hundred to sixty!”

“Taken! Wait till I get the money.”

“But I’ll hold the stakes,” said the other, not confiding much in Bruno’s looks.

[365]“It’s all the same to me,” answered the latter, trusting to his fists. Then turning to his brother he added, “Even if you do keep out, I’m going in.” Tarsilo reflected: he loved his brother and liked the sport, and, unable to desert him, he murmured, “Let it go.”

They made their way to Lucas, who, on seeing them approach, smiled.

“Sir!” called Tarsilo.

“What’s up?”

“How much will you give us?” asked the two brothers together.

“I’ve already told you. If you will undertake to get others for the purpose of making a surprise-attack on the barracks, I’ll give each of you thirty pesos and ten pesos for each companion you bring. If all goes well, each one will receive a hundred pesos and you double that amount. Don Crisostomo is rich.”

“Accepted!” exclaimed Bruno. “Let’s have the money.”

“I knew you were brave, as your father was! Come, so that those fellows who killed him may not overhear us,” said Lucas, indicating the civil-guards.

Taking them into a corner, he explained to them while he was counting out the money, “Tomorrow Don Crisostomo will get back with the arms. Day after tomorrow, about eight o’clock at night, go to the cemetery and I’ll let you know the final arrangements. You have time to look for companions.”

After they had left him the two brothers seemed to have changed parts—Tarsilo was calm, while Bruno was uneasy.[366]

1*Lásak, talisain*, and *bulik* are some of the numerous terms used in the vernacular to describe fighting-cocks.—TR.

2Another form of the corruption of *compadre*, “friend,” “neighbor.”—TR.

3It is a superstition of the cockpit that the color of the victor in the first bout decides the winners for that session: thus, the red having won, the *lásak*, in whose plumage a red color predominates, should be the victor in the succeeding bout.—TR.

[Contents]

Chapter XLVII
The Two Señoras

While Capitan Tiago was gambling on his *lásak*, Doña Victorina was taking a walk through the town for the purpose of observing how the indolent Indians kept their houses and fields. She was dressed as elegantly as possible with all her ribbons and flowers over her silk gown, in order to impress the provincials and make them realize what a distance intervened between them and her sacred person. Giving her arm to her lame husband, she strutted along the streets amid the wonder and stupefaction of the natives. Her cousin Linares had remained in the house.

"What ugly shacks these Indians have!" she began with a grimace. "I don't see how they can live in them—one must have to be an Indian! And how rude they are and how proud! They don't take off their hats when they meet us! Hit them over the head as the curates and the officers of the Civil Guard do—teach them politeness!"

"And if they hit me back?" asked Dr. De Espadaña.

"That's what you're a man for!"

"B-but, I'm l-lame!"

Doña Victorina was falling into a bad humor. The streets were unpaved and the train of her gown was covered with dust. Besides, they had met a number of young women, who, in passing them, had dropped their eyes and had not admired her rich costume as they should have done. Sinang's cochero, who was driving Sinang and her cousin in an elegant carriage, had the impudence to yell "*Tabi!*" in such a commanding tone that she had to jump out of the way, and could only protest: "Look at that [367]brute of a cochero! I'm going to tell his master to train his servants better."
"Let's go back to the house," she commanded to her husband, who, fearing a storm, wheeled on his crutch in obedience to her mandate.

They met and exchanged greetings with the alferez. This increased Doña Victorina's ill humor, for the officer not only did not proffer any compliment on her costume, but even seemed to stare at it in a mocking way.

“You ought not to shake hands with a mere alferez,” she said to her husband as the soldier left them. “He scarcely touched his helmet while you took off your hat. You don’t know how to maintain your rank!”

“He’s the b-boss here!”

“What do we care for that? We are Indians, perhaps?”

“You’re right,” he assented, not caring to quarrel. They passed in front of the officer’s dwelling. Doña Consolacion was at the window, as usual, dressed in flannel and smoking her cigar. As the house was low, the two señoras measured one another with looks; Doña Victorina stared while the Muse of the Civil Guard examined her from head to foot, and then, sticking out her lower lip, turned her head away and spat on the ground. This used up the last of Doña Victorina’s patience. Leaving her husband without support, she planted herself in front of the alfereza, trembling with anger from head to foot and unable to speak. Doña Consolacion slowly turned her head, calmly looked her over again, and once more spat, this time with greater disdain.

“What’s the matter with you, Doña?” she asked.

“Can you tell me, señora, why you look at me so? Are you envious?” Doña Victorina was at length able to articulate.

“I, envious of you, I, of you?” drawled the Muse. “Yes, I envy you those frizzes!”

“Come, woman!” pleaded the doctor. “D-don’t t-take any n-notice!”

[368]“Let me teach this shameless slattern a lesson,” replied his wife, giving him such a shove that he nearly kissed the ground. Then she again turned to Doña Consolacion.
“Remember who you’re dealing with!” she exclaimed. “Don’t think that I’m a provincial or a soldier’s *querida!* In my house in Manila the alfereces don’t eater, they wait at the door.”

“Oho, *Excelentísima Señora!* Alfereces don’t enter, but cripples do—like that one—ha, ha, ha!”

Had it not been for the rouge, Doña Victorian would have been seen to blush. She tried to get to her antagonist, but the sentinel stopped her. In the meantime the street was filling up with a curious crowd.

“Listen, I lower myself talking to you—people of quality—Don’t you want to wash my clothes? I’ll pay you well! Do you think that I don’t know that you were a washerwoman*?*”

Doña Consolacion straightened up furiously; the remark about washing hurt her. “Do you think that we don’t know who you are and what class of people you belong with? Get out, my husband has already told me! Señora, I at least have never belonged to more than one, but you? One must be dying of hunger to take the leavings, the mop of the whole world!”

This shot found its mark with Doña Victorina. She rolled up her sleeves, clenched her fists, and gritted her teeth. “Come down, old sow!” she cried. “I’m going to smash that dirty mouth of yours! *Querida* of a battalion, filthy hag!”

The Muse immediately disappeared from the window and was soon seen running down the stairs flourishing her husband’s whip.

Don Tiburcio interposed himself supplicatingly, but they would have come to blows had not the alferez arrived on the scene.

“Ladies! Don Tiburcio!”

“Train your woman better, buy her some decent clothes, [369]and if you haven’t any money left, rob the people—that’s what you’ve got soldiers for!” yelled Doña Victorina.
“Here I am, señora! Why doesn’t your Excellency smash my mouth? You’re only tongue and spittle, Doña Excelencia!”

“Señora!” cried the alferez furiously to Doña Victorina, “be thankful that I remember that you’re a woman or else I’d kick you to pieces—frizzes, ribbons, and all!”

“S-señor Alferez!”

“Get out, you quack! You don’t wear the pants!”

The women brought into play words and gestures, insults and abuse, dragging out all the evil that was stored in the recesses of their minds. Since all four talked at once and said so many things that might hurt the prestige of certain classes by the truths that were brought to light, we forbear from recording what they said. The curious spectators, while they may not have understood all that was said, got not a little entertainment out of the scene and hoped that the affair would come to blows. Unfortunately for them, the curate came along and restored order.

“Señores! Señoras! What a shame! Señor Alferez!”

“What are you doing here, you hypocrite, Carlist!”

“Don Tiburcio, take your wife away! Señora, hold your tongue!”

“Say that to these robbers of the poor!”

Little by little the lexicon of epithets was exhausted, the review of shamelessness of the two couples completed, and with threats and insults they gradually drew away from one another. Fray Salvi moved from one group to the other, giving animation to the scene. Would that our friend the correspondent had been present!

“This very day we’ll go to Manila and see the Captain-General!” declared the raging Doña Victorina to her husband. “You’re not a man! It’s a waste of money to buy trousers for you!”

“B-but, woman, the g-guards? I’m l-lame!”

[370]“You must challenge him for pistol or sword, or—or—” Doña Victorina stared fixedly at his false teeth.
“My d-dear, I’ve never had hold of a—”

But she did not let him finish. With a majestic sweep of her hand she snatched out his false teeth and trampled them in the street.

Thus, he half-crying and she breathing fire, they reached the house. Linares was talking with Maria Clara, Sinang, and Victoria, and as he had heard nothing of the quarrel, became rather uneasy at sight of his cousins. Maria Clara, lying in an easy-chair among pillows and wraps, was greatly surprised to see the new physiognomy of her doctor.

“Cousin,” began Doña Victorina, “you must challenge the alferez right away, or—”

“Why?” asked the startled Linares.

“You challenge him right now or else I’ll tell everybody here who you are.”

“But, Doña Victorina!”

The three girls exchanged glances.

“You’ll see! The alferez has insulted us and said that you are what you are! His old hag came down with a whip and he, this thing here, permitted the insult—a man!”

“*Abá!*” exclaimed Sinang, “they’re had a fight and we didn’t see it!”

“The alferez smashed the doctor’s teeth,” observed Victoria.

“This very day we go to Manila. You, you stay here to challenge him or else I’ll tell Don Santiago that all we’re told him is a lie, I’ll tell him—”

“But, Doña Victorina, Doña Victorina,” interrupted the now pallid Linares, going up to her, “be calm, don’t call up—” Then he added in a whisper, “Don’t be imprudent, especially just now.”

At that moment Capitan Tiago came in from the cockpit, sad and sighing; he had lost his *lásak*. But Doña Victorina left him no time to grieve. In a few words but [371]with no lack of strong language she related what had happened, trying of course to put herself in the best light possible.
“Linares is going to challenge him, do you hear? If he doesn’t, don’t let him marry your daughter, don’t you permit it! If he hasn’t any courage, he doesn’t deserve Clarita!”

“So you’re going to marry this gentleman?” asked Sinang, but her merry eyes filled with tears. “I knew that you were prudent but not that you were fickle.”

Pale as wax, Maria Clara partly rose and stared with frightened eyes at her father, at Doña Victorina, at Linares. The latter blushed, Capitan Tiago dropped his eyes, while the señora went on:

“Clarita, bear this in mind: never marry a man that doesn’t wear trousers. You expose yourself to insults, even from the dogs!”

The girl did not answer her, but turned to her friends and said, “Help me to my room, I can’t walk alone.”

By their aid she rose, and with her waist encircled by the round arms of her friends, resting her marble-like head on the shoulder of the beautiful Victoria, she went to her chamber.

That same night the married couple gathered their effects together and presented Capitan Tiago with a bill which amounted to several thousand pesos. Very early the following day they left for Manila in his carriage, committing to the bashful Linares the office of avenger.[372]
[Contents]

Chapter XLVIII
The Enigma

Volverán las oscuras golondrinas.1

BECQUER.

As Lucas had foretold, Ibarra arrived on the following day. His first visit was to the family of Capitan Tiago for the purpose of seeing Maria Clara and informing her that his Grace had reconciled him with religion, and that he brought to the curate a letter of recommendation in the handwriting of the Archbishop himself. Aunt Isabel was not a little rejoiced at this, for she liked the young man and did not look favorably on the marriage of her niece with Linares. Capitan Tiago was not at home.

“Come in,” said the aunt in her broken Spanish. “Maria, Don Crisostomo is once more in the favor of God. The Archbishop has*discommunicated* him.”

But the youth was unable to advance, the smile froze on his lips, words failed him. Standing on the balcony at the side of Maria Clara was Linares, arranging bouquets of flowers and leaves. Roses and sampaguitas were scattered about on the floor. Reclining in a big chair, pale, with a sad and pensive air, Maria Clara toyed with an ivory fan which was not whiter than her shapely fingers.

At the appearance of Ibarra, Linares turned pale and Maria Clara’s cheeks flushed crimson. She tried to rise, but strength failed her, so she dropped her eyes and let the fan fall. An embarrassed silence prevailed for a few moments. Ibarra was then able to move forward and murmur tremblingly, “I’ve just got back and have come immediately [373]to see you. I find you better than I had thought I should.”
The girl seemed to have been stricken dumb; she neither said anything nor raised her eyes.

Ibarra looked Linares over from head to foot with a stare which the bashful youth bore haughtily.

“Well, I see that my arrival was unexpected,” said Ibarra slowly. “Maria, pardon me that I didn’t have myself announced. At some other time I’ll be

able to make explanations to you about my conduct. We'll still see one another surely."

These last words were accompanied by a look at Linares. The girl raised toward him her lovely eyes, full of purity and sadness. They were so beseeching and eloquent that Ibarra stopped in confusion.

"May I come tomorrow?"

"You know that for my part you are always welcome," she answered faintly.

Ibarra withdrew in apparent calm, but with a tempest in his head and ice in his heart. What he had just seen and felt was incomprehensible to him: was it doubt, dislike, or faithlessness?

"Oh, only a woman after all!" he murmured.

Taking no note of where he was going, he reached the spot where the schoolhouse was under construction. The work was well advanced, Ñor Juan with his mile and plumb-bob coming and going among the numerous laborers. Upon catching sight of Ibarra he ran to meet him.

"Don Crisostomo, at last you've come! We've all been waiting for you. Look at the walls, they're already more than a meter high and within two days they'll be up to the height of a man. I've put in only the strongest and most durable woods—molave, dungon, ipil, langil—and sent for the finest —tindalo, malatapay, pino, and narra—for the finishings. Do you want to look at the foundations?"

The workmen saluted Ibarra respectfully, while Ñor [374]Juan made voluble explanations. "Here is the piping that I have taken the liberty to add," he said. "These subterranean conduits lead to a sort of cesspool, thirty yards away. It will help fertilize the garden. There was nothing of that in the plan. Does it displease you?"
"Quite the contrary, I approve what you've done and congratulate you. You are a real architect. From whom did you learn the business?"

"From myself, sir," replied the old man modestly.

"Oh, before I forget about it—tell those who may have scruples, if perhaps there is any one who fears to speak to me, that I'm no longer

excommunicated. The Archbishop invited me to dinner."

"*Abá*, sir, we don't pay any attention to excommunications! All of us are excommunicated. Padre Damaso himself is and yet he stays fat."

"How's that?"

"It's true, sir, for a year ago he caned the coadjutor, who is just as much a sacred person as he is. Who pays any attention to excommunications, sir?"

Among the laborers Ibarra caught sight of Elias, who, as he saluted him along with the others, gave him to understand by a look that he had something to say to him.

"Ñor Juan," said Ibarra, "will you bring me your list of the laborers?"

Ñor Juan disappeared, and Ibarra approached Elias, who was by himself, lifting a heavy stone into a cart.

"If you can grant me a few hours' conversation, sir, walk down to the shore of the lake this evening and get into my banka." The youth nodded, and Elias moved away.

Ñor Juan now brought the list, but Ibarra scanned it in vain; the name of Elias did not appear on it![375]

1The dark swallows will return.

[Contents]

Chapter XLIX
The Voice of the Hunted

As the sun was sinking below the horizon Ibarra stepped into Elias's banka at the shore of the lake. The youth looked out of humor.

"Pardon me, sir," said Elias sadly, on seeing him, "that I have been so bold as to make this appointment. I wanted to talk to you freely and so I chose this means, for here we won't have any listeners. We can return within an hour."

"You're wrong, friend," answered Ibarra with a forced smile. "You'll have to take me to that town whose belfry we see from here. A mischance forces me to this."

"A mischance?"

"Yes. On my way here I met the alferez and he forced his company on me. I thought of you and remembered that he knows you, so to get away from him I told him that I was going to that town. I'll have to stay there all day, since he will look for me tomorrow afternoon."

"I appreciate your thoughtfulness, but you might simply have invited him to accompany you," answered Elias naturally.

"What about you?"

"He wouldn't have recognized me, since the only time he ever saw me he wasn't in a position to take careful note of my appearance."

"I'm in bad luck," sighed Ibarra, thinking of Maria Clara. "What did you have to tell me?"

Elias looked about him. They were already at a distance from the shore, the sun had set, and as in these latitudes there is scarcely any twilight, the shades were [376]lengthening, bringing into view the bright disk of the full moon.
"Sir," replied Elias gravely, "I am the bearer of the wishes of many unfortunates."

"Unfortunates? What do you mean?"

In a few words Elias recounted his conversation with the leader of the tulisanes, omitting the latter's doubts and threats. Ibarra listened attentively and was the first to break the long silence that reigned after he had finished his story.

"So they want—"

"Radical reforms in the armed forces, in the priesthood, and in the administration of justice; that is to say, they ask for paternal treatment from the government."

"Reforms? In what sense?"

"For example, more respect for a man's dignity, more security for the individual, less force in the armed forces, fewer privileges for that corps which so easily abuses what it has."

"Elias," answered the youth, "I don't know who you are, but I suspect that you are not a man of the people; you think and act so differently from others. You will understand me if I tell you that, however imperfect the condition of affairs may be now, it would be more so if it were changed. I might be able to get the friends that I have in Madrid to talk, *by paying them*; I might even be able to see the Captain-General; but neither would the former accomplish anything nor has the latter sufficient power to introduce so many novelties. Nor would I ever take a single step in that direction, for the reason that, while I fully understand that it is true that these corporations have their faults, they are necessary at this time. They are what is known as a necessary evil."

Greatly surprised, Elias raised his head and looked at him in astonishment. "Do you, then, also believe in a necessary evil, sir?" he asked in a voice that trembled [377]slightly. "Do you believe that in order to do good it is necessary to do evil?"

"No, I believe in it as in a violent remedy that we make use of when we wish to cure a disease. Now then, the country is an organism suffering from a chronic malady, and in order to cure it, the government sees the necessity of employing such means, harsh and violent if you wish, but useful and necessary."

“He is a bad doctor, sir, who seeks only to destroy or stifle the symptoms without an effort to examine into the origin of the malady, or, when knowing it, fears to attack it. The Civil Guard has only this purpose: the repression of crime by means of terror and force, a purpose that it does not fulfil or accomplishes only incidentally. You must take into account the truth that society can be severe with individuals only when it has provided them with the means necessary for their moral perfection. In our country, where there is no society, since there is no unity between the people and the government, the latter should be indulgent, not only because indulgence is necessary but also because the individual, abandoned and uncared for by it, has less responsibility, for the very reason that he has received less guidance. Besides, following out your comparison, the treatment that is applied to the ills of the country is so destructive that it is felt only in the sound parts of the organism, whose vitality is thus weakened and made receptive of evil. Would it not be more rational to strengthen the diseased parts of the organism and lessen the violence of the remedy a little?”

“To weaken the Civil Guard would be to endanger the security of the towns.”

“The security of the towns!” exclaimed Elias bitterly. “It will soon be fifteen years since the towns have had their Civil Guard, and look: still we have tulisanes, still we hear that they sack towns, that they infest the highways. Robberies continue and the perpetrators are not hunted down; crime flourishes, and the real criminal goes scot-free, [378]but not so the peaceful inhabitant of the town. Ask any honorable citizen if he looks upon this institution as a benefit, a protection on the part of the government, and not as an imposition, a despotism whose outrageous acts do more damage than the violent deeds of criminals. These latter are indeed serious, but they are rare, and against them one has the right to defend himself, but against the molestations of legal force he is not even allowed a protest, and if they are not serious they are nevertheless continued and sanctioned. What effect does this institution produce among our people? It paralyzes communication because all are afraid of being abused on trifling pretexts. It pays more attention to formalities than to the real nature of things, which is the first symptom of incapacity. Because one has forgotten his cedula he must be manacled and knocked about, regardless of the fact that he may be a decent and respectable citizen. The superiors hold it their first duty to

make people salute them, either willingly or forcibly, even in the darkness of the night, and their inferiors imitate them by mistreating and robbing the country folk, nor are pretexts lacking to this end. Sanctity of the home does not exist; not long ago in Kalamba they entered, by forcing their way through the windows, the house of a peaceful inhabitant to whom their chief owed money and favors. There is no personal security; when they need to have their barracks or houses cleaned they go out and arrest any one who does not resist them, in order to make him work the whole day. Do you care to hear more? During these holidays gambling, which is prohibited by law, has gone on while they forcibly broke up the celebrations permitted by the authorities. You saw what the people thought about these things; what have they got by repressing their anger and hoping for human justice? Ah, sir, if that is what you call keeping the peace—"

"I agree with you that there are evils," replied Ibarra, "but let us bear with those evils on account of the benefits [379]that accompany them. This institution may be imperfect, but, believe me, by the fear that it inspires it keeps the number of criminals from increasing."

"Say rather that by this fear the number is increased," corrected Elias. "Before the creation of this corps almost all the evil-doers, with the exception of a very few, were criminals from hunger. They plundered and robbed in order to live, but when their time of want was passed, they again left the highways clear. Sufficient to put them to flight were the poor, but brave cuadrilleros, they who have been so calumniated by the writers about our country, who have for a right, death, for duty, fighting, and for reward, jests. Now there are tulisanes who are such for life. A single fault, a crime inhumanly punished, resistance against the outrages of this power, fear of atrocious tortures, east them out forever from society and condemn them to slay or be slain. The terrorism of the Civil Guard closes against them the doors of repentance, and as outlaws they fight to defend themselves in the mountains better than the soldiers at whom they laugh. The result is that we are unable to put an end to the evil that we have created. Remember what the prudence of the Captain-General de la Torre[1] accomplished. The amnesty granted by him to those unhappy people has proved that in those mountains there still beat the hearts of men and that they only wait for pardon. Terrorism is useful when the people are slaves, when the mountains afford no hiding-places, when power places a sentinel behind every tree, and when the body of the slave contains nothing more than a stomach and

intestines. But when in desperation he fights for his life, feeling his arm strong, his heart throb, his whole being fill with hate, how can terrorism hope to extinguish the flame to which it is only adding fuel?"

[380]"I am perplexed, Elias, to hear you talk thus, and I should almost believe that you were right had I not my own convictions. But note this fact —and don't be offended, for I consider you an exception—look who the men are that ask for these reforms" nearly all criminals or on the way to be such!"

"Criminals now, or future criminals; but why are they such? Because their peace has been disturbed, their happiness destroyed, their dearest affections wounded, and when they have asked justice for protection, they have become convinced that they can expect it only from themselves. But you are mistaken, sir, if you think that only the criminals ask for justice. Go from town to town, from house to house, listen to the secret sighings in the bosoms of the families, and you will be convinced that the evils which the Civil Guard corrects are the same as, if not less than, those it causes all the time. Should we decide from this that all the people are criminals? If so, then why defend some from the others, why not destroy them all?"

"Some error exists here which I do not see just now some fallacy in the theory to invalidate the practise, for in Spain, the mother country, this corps is displaying, and has ever displayed, great usefulness."

"I don't doubt it. Perhaps there, it is better organized, the men of better grade, perhaps also Spain needs it while the Philippines does not. Our customs, our mode of life, which are always invoked when there is a desire to deny us some right, are entirely overlooked when the desire is to impose something upon us. And tell me, sir, why have not the other nations, which from their nearness to Spain must be more like her than the Philippines is, adopted this institution? Is it because of this that they still have fewer robberies on their railway trains, fewer riots, fewer murders, and fewer assassinations in their great capitals?"

Ibarra bowed his head in deep thought, raising it after a few moments to reply: "This question, my friend, calls for serious study. If my inquiries convince me that these [381]complaints are well founded I will write to my friends in Madrid, since we have no representatives. Meanwhile, believe me

that the government needs a corps with strength enough to make itself respected and to enforce its authority."
"Yes, sir, when the government is at war with the country. But for the welfare of the government itself we must not have the people think that they are in opposition to authority. Rather, if such were true, if we prefer force to prestige, we ought to take care to whom we grant this unlimited power, this authority. So much power in the hands of men, ignorant men filled with passions, without moral training, of untried principles, is a weapon in the hands of a madman in a defenseless multitude. I concede and wish to believe with you that the government needs this weapon, but then let it choose this weapon carefully, let it select the most worthy instruments, and since it prefers to take upon itself authority, rather than have the people grant it, at least let it be seen that it knows how to exercise it."

Elias spoke passionately, enthusiastically, in vibrating tones; his eyes flashed. A solemn pause followed. The banka, unimpelled by the paddle, seemed to stand still on the water. The moon shone majestically in a sapphire sky and a few lights glimmered on the distant shore.

"What more do they ask for?" inquired Ibarra.

"Reform in the priesthood," answered Elias in a sad and discouraged tone. "These unfortunates ask for more protection against—"

"Against the religious orders?"

"Against their oppressors, sir."

"Has the Philippines forgotten what she owes to those orders? Has she forgotten the immense debt of gratitude that is due from her to those who snatched her from error to give her the true faith, to those who have protected her against the tyrannical acts of the civil power? This is the evil result of not knowing the history of our native land!"

[382]The surprised Elias could hardly credit what he heard. "Sir," he replied in a grave tone, "you accuse these people of ingratitude; let me, one of the people who suffer, defend them. Favors rendered, in order to have any claims to recognition, must be disinterested. Let us pass over its missionary work, the much-invoked Christian charity; let us brush history aside and not ask what Spain has done with the Jewish people, who gave all Europe a

Book, a Religion, and a God; what she has done with the Arabic people, who gave her culture, who were tolerant with her religious beliefs, and who awoke her lethargic national spirit, so nearly destroyed during the Roman and Gothic dominations. You say that she snatched us from error and gave us the true faith: do you call faith these outward forms, do you call religion this traffic in girdles and scapularies, truth these miracles and wonderful tales that we hear daily? Is this the law of Jesus Christ? For this it was hardly necessary that a God should allow Himself to be crucified or that we should be obliged to show eternal gratitude. Superstition existed long before —it was only necessary to systematize it and raise the price of its merchandise!

"You will tell me that however imperfect our religion may be at present, it is preferable to what we had before. I believe that, too, and would agree with you in saying so, but the cost is too great, since for it we have given up our nationality, our independence. For it we have given over to its priests our best towns, our fields, and still give up our savings by the purchase of religious objects. An article of foreign manufacture has been introduced among us, we have paid well for it, and we are even.

"If you mean the protection that they afforded us against the *encomenderos*,[2] I might answer that through them we [383]fell under the power of the *encomenderos*. But no, I realize that a true faith and a sincere love for humanity guided the first missionaries to our shores; I realize the debt of gratitude we owe to those noble hearts; I know that at that time Spain abounded in heroes of all kinds, in religious as well as in political affairs, in civil and in military life. But because the forefathers were virtuous, should we consent to the abuses of their degenerate descendants? Because they have rendered us great service, should we be to blame for preventing them from doing us wrong? The country does not ask for their expulsion but only for reforms required by the changed circumstances and new needs."

"I love our native land as well as you can, Elias; I understand something of what it desires, and I have listened with attention to all you have said. But, after all, my friend, I believe that we are looking at things through rather impassioned eyes. Here, less than in other parts, do I see the necessity for reforms."

“Is it possible, sir,” asked Elias, extending his arms in a gesture of despair, “that you do not see the necessity for reforms, you, after the misfortunes of your family?”

“Ah, I forget myself and my own troubles in the presence of the security of the Philippines, in the presence of the interests of Spain!” interrupted Ibarra warmly. “To preserve the Philippines it is meet that the friars continue as they are. On the union with Spain depends the welfare of our country.”

When Ibarra had ceased Elias still sat in an attitude of attention with a sad countenance and eyes that had lost their luster. “The missionaries conquered the country, it is true,” he replied, “but do you believe that by the friars the Philippines will be preserved?”

“Yes, by them alone. Such is the belief of all who have written about the country.”

[384]“Oh!” exclaimed Elias dejectedly, throwing the paddle clown in the banka, “I did not believe that you would have so poor an idea of the government and of the country. Why don’t you condemn both? What would you say of the members of a family that dwells in peace only through the intervention of an outsider: a country that is obedient because it is deceived; a government that commands be, cause it avails itself of fraud, a government that does not know how to make itself loved or respected for its own sake? Pardon me, sir, but I believe that our government is stupid and is working its own ruin when it rejoices that such is the belief. I thank you for your kindness, where do you wish me to take you now?”
“No,” replied Ibarra, “let us talk; it is necessary to see who is right on such an important subject.”

“Pardon me, sir,” replied Elias, shaking his head, “but I haven’t the eloquence to convince you. Even though I have had some education I am still an Indian, my way of life seems to you a precarious one, and my words will always seem to you suspicious. Those who have given voice to the opposite opinion are Spaniards, and as such, even though they may speak idly and foolishly, their tones, their titles, and their origin make their words sacred and give them such authority that I have desisted forever from arguing against them. Moreover, when I see that you, who love your country, you, whose father sleeps beneath these quiet waters, you, who have

seen yourself attacked, insulted, and persecuted, hold such opinions in spite of all these things, and in spite of your knowledge, I begin to doubt my own convictions and to admit the possibility that the people may be mistaken. I'll have to tell those unfortunates who have put their trust in men that they must place it in God and their own strength. Again I thank you—tell me where I shall take you."

"Elias, your bitter words touch my heart and make me also doubt. What do you want? I was not brought up among the people, so I am perhaps ignorant of their needs. [385]I spent my childhood in the Jesuit college, I grew up in Europe, I have been molded by books, learning only what men have been able to bring to light. What remains among the shadows, what the writers do not tell, that I am ignorant of. Yet I love our country as you do, not only because it is the duty of every man to love the country to which he owes his existence and to which he will no doubt owe his final rest, not only because my father so taught me, but also because my mother was an Indian, because my fondest recollections cluster around my country, and I love it also because to it I owe and shall ever owe my happiness!"
"And I, because to it I owe my misfortunes," muttered Elias.

"Yes, my friend, I know that you suffer, that you are unfortunate, and that those facts make you look into the future darkly and influence your way of thinking, so I am somewhat forearmed against your complaints. If I could understand your motives, something of your past—"

"My misfortunes had another source. If I thought that the story of them would be of any use, I would relate it to you, since, apart from the fact that I make no secret of it, it is quite well known to many."

"Perhaps on hearing it I might correct my opinions. You know that I do not trust much to theories, preferring rather to be guided by facts."

Elias remained thoughtful for a few moments. "If that is the case, sir, I will tell you my story briefly."[386]

1General Carlos Maria de let Torte y Nava Carrada, the first "liberal" governor of the Philippines, was Captain-General from 1869 to 1871. He issued an amnesty to the outlaws and created the Civil Guard, largely from among those who surrendered themselves in response to it.—TR.

2After the conquest (officially designated as the “pacification”), the Spanish soldiers who had rendered faithful service were allotted districts known as*encomiendas*, generally of about a thousand natives each. The *encomendero* was entitled to the tribute from the people in his district and was in return supposed to protect them and provide religious instruction. The early friars alleged extortionate greed and [383n]brutal conduct on the part of the *encomenderos* and made vigorous protests in the natives’ behalf.—TR.

[Contents]

Chapter L
Elias's Story

"Some sixty years ago my grandfather dwelt in Manila, being employed as a bookkeeper in a Spanish commercial house. He was then very young, was married, and had a son. One night from some unknown cause the warehouse burned down. The fire was communicated to the dwelling of his employer and from there to many other buildings. The losses were great, a scapegoat was sought, and the merchant accused my grandfather. In vain he protested his innocence, but he was poor and unable to pay the great lawyers, so he was condemned to be flogged publicly and paraded through the streets of Manila. Not so very long since they still used the infamous method of punishment which the people call the '*caballo y vaca*,'[1] and which is a thousand times more dreadful than death itself. Abandoned by all except his young wife, my grandfather saw himself tied to a horse, followed by an unfeeling crowd, and whipped on every street-corner in the sight of men, his brothers, and in the neighborhood of numerous temples of a God of peace. When the wretch, now forever disgraced, had satisfied the vengeance of man with his blood, his tortures, and his cries, he had to be taken off the horse, for he had become unconscious. Would to God that he had died! But by one of those refinements of cruelty he was given his liberty. His wife, pregnant at the time, vainly begged from door to door for work or alms in order to care for her sick husband and their poor son, but who would trust the wife of an incendiary and a disgraced man? The wife, then, had to become a prostitute!"

[387]Ibarra rose in his seat.

"Oh, don't get excited! Prostitution was not now a dishonor for her or a disgrace to her husband; for them honor and shame no longer existed. The husband recovered from his wounds and came with his wife and child to hide himself in the mountains of this province. Here they lived several months, miserable, alone, hated and shunned by all. The wife gave birth to a sickly child, which fortunately died. Unable to endure such misery and being less courageous than his wife, my grandfather, in despair at seeing his sick wife deprived of all care and assistance, hanged himself. His corpse rotted in sight of the son, who was scarcely able to care for his sick mother, and the stench from it led to their discovery. Her husband's death was

attributed to her, for of what is the wife of a wretch, a woman who has been a prostitute besides, not believed to be capable? If she swears, they call her a perjurer; if she weeps, they say that she is acting; and that she blasphemes when she calls on God. Nevertheless, they had pity on her condition and waited for the birth of another child before they flogged her. You know how the friars spread the belief that the Indians can only be managed by blows: read what Padre Gaspar de San Agustin says![2]

[388]"A woman thus condemned will curse the day on which her child is born, and this, besides prolonging her torture, violates every maternal sentiment. Unfortunately, she brought forth a healthy child. Two months afterwards, the sentence was executed to the great satisfaction of the men who thought that thus they were performing their duty. Not being at peace in these mountains, she then fled with her two sons to a neighboring province, where they lived like wild beasts, hating and hated. The elder of the two boys still remembered, even amid so much misery, the happiness of his infancy, so he became a tulisan as soon as he found himself strong enough. Before long the bloody name of Balat spread from province to province, a terror to the people, because in his revenge he did everything with blood and fire. The younger, who was by nature kind-hearted, resigned himself to his shameful fate along with his mother, and they lived on what the woods afforded, clothing themselves in the cast-off rags of travelers. She had lost her name, being known only as *the convict, the prostitute, the scourged*. He was known as the son of his mother only, because the gentleness of his disposition led every one to believe that he was not the son of the incendiary and because any doubt as to the morality of the Indians can be held reasonable.

"At last, one day the notorious Balat fell into the clutches of the authorities, who exacted of him a strict accounting for his crimes, and of his mother for having done nothing to rear him properly. One morning the [389]younger brother went to look for his mother, who had gone into the woods to gather mushrooms and had not returned. He found her stretched out on the ground under a cotton-tree beside the highway, her face turned toward the sky, her eyes fixed and staring, her clenched hands buried in the blood-stained earth. Some impulse moved him to look up in the direction toward which the eyes of the dead woman were staring, and he saw hanging from a branch a basket and in the basket the gory head of his brother!"

“My God!” ejaculated Ibarra.

“That might have been the exclamation of my father,” continued Elias coldly. “The body of the brigand had been cut up and the trunk buried, but his limbs were distributed and hung up in different towns. If ever you go from Kalamba to Santo Tomas you will still see a withered lomboy-tree where one of my uncle’s legs hung rotting—nature has blasted the tree so that it no longer grows or bears fruit. The same was done with the other limbs, but the head, as the best part of the person and the portion most easily recognizable, was hung up in front of his mother’s hut!”

Ibarra bowed his head.

“The boy fled like one accursed,” Elias went on. “He fled from town to town by mountain and valley. When he thought that he had reached a place where he was not known, he hired himself out as a laborer in the house of a rich man in the province of Tayabas. His activity and the gentleness of his character gained him the good-will of all who did not know his past, and by his thrift and economy he succeeded in accumulating a little capital. He was still young, he thought his sorrows buried in the past, and he dreamed of a happy future. His pleasant appearance, his youth, and his somewhat unfortunate condition won him the love of a young woman of the town, but he dared not ask for her hand from fear that his past might become known. But love is stronger than anything else and they wandered from the straight path, so, to save the woman’s [390]honor, he risked everything by asking for her in marriage. The records were sought and his whole past became known. The girl’s father was rich and succeeded in having him prosecuted. He did not try to defend himself but admitted everything, and so was sent to prison. The woman gave birth to twins, a boy and a girl, who were nurtured in secret and made to believe that their father was dead no difficult matter, since at a tender age they saw their mother die, and they gave little thought to tracing genealogies. As our maternal grandfather was rich our childhood passed happily. My sister and I were brought up together, loving one another as only twins can love when they have no other affections. When quite young I was sent to study in the Jesuit College, and my sister, in order that we might not be completely separated, entered the Concordia College.[3] After our brief education was finished, since we desired only to be farmers, we returned to the town to take possession of the inheritance left us

by our grandfather. We lived happily for a time, the future smiled on us, we had many servants, our' fields produced abundant harvests, and my sister was about to be married to a young man whom she adored and who responded equally to her affection.

"But in a dispute over money and by reason of my haughty disposition at that time, I alienated the good will of a distant relative, and one day he east in my face my doubtful birth and shameful descent. I thought it all a slander and demanded satisfaction. The tomb which covered so much rottenness was again opened and to my consternation the whole truth came out to overwhelm me. To add to our sorrow, we had had for many years an old servant who had endured all my whims without ever leaving [391]us, contenting himself merely with weeping and groaning at the rough jests of the other servants. I don't know how my relative had found it out, but the fact is that he had this old man summoned into court and made him tell the truth: that old servant, who had clung to his beloved children, and whom I had abused many times, was my father! Our happiness faded away, I gave up our fortune, my sister lost her betrothed, and with our father we left the town to seek refuge elsewhere. The thought that he had contributed to our misfortunes shortened the old man's days, but before he died I learned from his lips the whole story of the sorrowful past.

"My sister and I were left alone. She wept a great deal, but even in the midst of such great sorrows as heaped themselves upon us, she could not forget her love. Without complaining, without uttering a word, she saw her former sweetheart married to another girl, but I watched her gradually sicken without being able to console her. One day she disappeared, and it was in vain that I sought everywhere, in vain I made inquiries about her. About six months afterwards I learned that about that time, after a flood on the lake, there had been found in some rice fields bordering on the beach at Kalamba, the corpse of a young woman who had been either drowned or murdered, for she had had, so they said, a knife sticking in her breast. The officials of that town published the fact in the country round about, but no one came to claim the body, no young woman apparently had disappeared. From the description they gave me afterward of her dress, her ornaments, the beauty of her countenance, and her abundant hair, I recognized in her my poor sister.

“Since then I have wandered from province to province. My reputation and my history are in the mouths of many. They attribute great deeds to me, sometimes calumniating me, but I pay little attention to men, keeping ever on my way. Such in brief is my story, a story of one of the judgments of men.”

[392]Elias fell silent as he rowed along.
“I still believe that you are not wrong,” murmured Crisostomo in a low voice, “when you say that justice should seek to do good by rewarding virtue and educating the criminals. Only, it’s impossible, Utopian! And where could be secured so much money, so many new employees?”

“For what, then, are the priests who proclaim their mission of peace and charity? Is it more meritorious to moisten the head of a child with water, to give it salt to eat, than to awake in the benighted conscience of a criminal that spark which God has granted to every man to light him to his welfare? Is it more humane to accompany a criminal to the scaffold than to lead him along the difficult path from vice to virtue? Don’t they also pay spies, executioners, civil-guards? These things, besides being dirty, also cost money.”

“My friend, neither you nor I, although we may wish it, can accomplish this.”

“Alone, it is true, we are nothing, but take up the cause of the people, unite yourself with the people, be not heedless of their cries, set an example to the rest, spread the idea of what is called a fatherland!”

“What the people ask for is impossible. We must wait.”

“Wait! To wait means to suffer!”

“If I should ask for it, the powers that be would laugh at me.”

“But if the people supported you?”

“Never! I will never be the one to lead the multitude to get by force what the government does not think proper to grant, no! If I should ever see that multitude armed I would place myself on the side of the government, for in such a mob I should not see my countrymen. I desire the country’s welfare,

therefore I would build a schoolhouse. I seek it by means of instruction, by progressive advancement; without light there is no road."

"Neither is there liberty without strife!" answered Elias.

[393]"The fact is that I don't want that liberty!"
"The fact is that without liberty there is no light," replied the pilot with warmth. "You say that you are only slightly acquainted with your country, and I believe you. You don't see the struggle that is preparing, you don't see the cloud on the horizon. The fight is beginning in the sphere of ideas, to descend later into the arena, which will be dyed with blood. I hear the voice of God—woe unto them who would oppose it! For them History has not been written!"

Elias was transfigured; standing uncovered, with his manly face illuminated by the moon, there was something extraordinary about him. He shook his long hair, and went on:

"Don't you see how everything is awakening? The sleep has lasted for centuries, but one day the thunderbolt[4] struck, and in striking, infused life. Since then new tendencies are stirring our spirits, and these tendencies, today scattered, will some day be united, guided by the God who has not failed other peoples and who will not fail us, for His cause is the cause of liberty!"

A solemn silence followed these words, while the banka, carried along insensibly by the waves, neared the shore.

Elias was the first to break the silence. "What shall I tell those who sent me?" he asked with a change from his former tone.

"I've already told you: I greatly deplore their condition, but they should wait. Evils are not remedied by other evils, and in our misfortunes each of us has his share of blame."

Elias did not again reply, but dropped his head and rowed along until they reached the shore, where he took leave of Ibarra: "I thank you, sir, for the condescension you have shown me. Now, for your own good, I beg of you that in the future you forget me and that you do not [394]recognize me again, no matter in what situation you may find me."

So saying, he drew away in the banka, rowing toward a thicket on the shore. As he covered the long distance he remained silent, apparently intent upon nothing but the thousands of phosphorescent diamonds that the oar caught up and dropped back into the lake, where they disappeared mysteriously into the blue waves.

When he had reached the shadow of the thicket a man came out of it and approached the banka. “What shall I tell the capitan?” he asked.

“Tell him that Elias, if he lives, will keep his word,” was the sad answer.

“When will you join us, then?”

“When your capitan thinks that the hour of danger has come.”

“Very well. Good-by!”

“If I don’t die first,” added Elias in a low voice.[395]

1Horse and cow.

2Fray Gaspar de San Agustin, O.S.A., who came to the Philippines in 1668 and died in Manila in 1724, was the author of a history of the conquest, but his chief claim to immortality comes from a letter written in 1720 on the character and habits of “the Indian inhabitants of these islands,” a letter which was widely circulated and which has been extensively used by other writers. In it the writer with senile querulousness harped up and down the whole gamut of abuse in describing and commenting upon the vices of the natives, very artlessly revealing the fact in many places, however, that his observations were drawn principally from the conduct of the servants in the conventos and homes of Spaniards. To him in this letter is due the credit of giving its wide popularity to the specious couplet:

El bejuco crece	(The rattan thrives
Donde el indio nace,	Where the Indian lives,)

which the holy men who delighted in quoting it took as an additional evidence of the wise dispensation of the God of Nature, rather inconsistently [388n]overlooking its incongruity with the teachings of Him in whose name they assumed their holy office.

It seems somewhat strange that a spiritual father should have written in such terms about his charges until the fact appears that the letter was addressed to an influential friend in Spain for use in opposition to a proposal to carry out the provisions of the Council of Trent by turning the parishes in the islands over to the secular, and hence, native, clergy. A translation of this bilious tirade, with copious annotations showing to what a great extent it has been used by other writers, appears in Volume XL of Blair and Robertson’s *The Philippine Islands*.— TR.

3The Colegio de la Inmaculada Concepcion Concordia, situated near Santa Ana in the suburbs of Manila, was founded in 1868 for the education of native girls, by a pious Spanish-Filipino lady, who

donated a building and grounds, besides bearing the expense of bringing out seven Sisters of Charity to take charge of it.—TR.

4The execution of the Filipino priests Burgos, Gomez, and Zamora, in 1872.—TR.

[Contents]

Chapter LI
Exchanges

The bashful Linares was anxious and ill at ease. He had just received from Doña Victorina a letter which ran thus:

DEER COZIN within 3 days i expec to here from you if the alferes has killed you or you him i dont want anuther day to pass befour that broot has his punishment if that tim passes an you havent challenjed him ill tel don santiago you was never segretary nor joked with canobas nor went on a spree with the general don arseño martinez ill tel clarita its all a humbug an ill not give you a sent more if you challenje him i promis all you want so lets see you challenje him i warn you there must be no excuses nor delays yore cozin who loves you

VICTORINA DE LOS REYES DE DE ESPADAÑA

sampaloc monday 7 in the evening

The affair was serious. He was well enough acquainted with the character of Doña Victorina to know what she was capable of. To talk to her of reason was to talk of honesty and courtesy to a revenue carbineer when he proposes to find contraband where there is none, to plead with her would be useless, to deceive her worse—there was no way out of the difficulty but to send the challenge.

"But how? Suppose he receives me with violence?" he soliloquized, as he paced to and fro. "Suppose I find him with his señora? Who will be willing to be my second? The curate? Capitan Tiago? Damn the hour in which I listened to her advice! The old toady! To oblige me to get myself tangled up, to tell lies, to make a [396]blustering fool of myself! What will the young lady say about me? Now I'm sorry that I've been secretary to all the ministers!"

While the good Linares was in the midst of his soliloquy, Padre Salvi came in. The Franciscan was even thinner and paler than usual, but his eyes gleamed with a strange light and his lips wore a peculiar smile.

"Señor Linares, all alone?" was his greeting as he made his way to the sala, through the half-opened door of which floated the notes from a piano. Linares tried to smile.

"Where is Don Santiago?" continued the curate.

Capitan Tiago at that moment appeared, kissed the curate's hand, and relieved him of his hat and cane, smiling all the while like one of the blessed.

"Come, come!" exclaimed the curate, entering the sala, followed by Linares and Capitan Tiago, "I have good news for you all. I've just received letters from Manila which confirm the one Señor Ibarra brought me yesterday. So, Don Santiago, the objection is removed."

Maria Clara, who was seated at the piano between her two friends, partly rose, but her strength failed her, and she fell back again. Linares turned pale and looked at Capitan Tiago, who dropped his eyes.

"That young man seems to me to be very agreeable," continued the curate. "At first I misjudged him—he's a little quick-tempered—but he knows so well how to atone for his faults afterwards that one can't hold anything against him. If it were not for Padre Damaso—"

Here the curate shot a quick glance at Maria Clara, who was listening without taking her eyes off the sheet of music, in spite of the sly pinches of Sinang, who was thus expressing her joy—had she been alone she would have danced.

"Padre Damaso?" queried Linares.

"Yes, Padre Damaso has said," the curate went on, without taking his gaze from Maria Clara, "that as—being her sponsor in baptism, he can't permit —but, after [397]all, I believe that if Señor Ibarra begs his pardon, which I don't doubt he'll do, everything will be settled."
Maria Clara rose, made some excuse, and retired to her chamber, accompanied by Victoria.

"But if Padre Damaso doesn't pardon him?" asked Capitan Tiago in a low voice.

"Then Maria Clara will decide. Padre Damaso is her father—spiritually. But I think they'll reach an understanding."

At that moment footsteps were heard and Ibarra appeared, followed by Aunt Isabel. His appearance produced varied impressions. To his affable greeting Capitan Tiago did not know whether to laugh or to cry. He

acknowledged the presence of Linares with a profound bow. Fray Salvi arose and extended his hand so cordially that the youth could not restrain a look of astonishment.

“Don’t be surprised,” said Fray Salvi, “for I was just now praising you.”

Ibarra thanked him and went up to Sinang, who began with her childish garrulity, “Where have you been all day? We were all asking, where can that soul redeemed from purgatory have gone? And we all said the same thing.”

“May I know what you said?”

“No, that’s a secret, but I’ll tell you soon alone. Now tell me where you’ve been, so we can see who guessed right.”

“No, that’s also a secret, but I’ll tell you alone, if these gentlemen will excuse us.”

“Certainly, certainly, by all means!” exclaimed Padre Salvi.

Rejoicing over the prospect of learning a secret, Sinang led Crisostomo to one end of the sala.

“Tell me, little friend,” he asked, “is Maria angry with me?”

“I don’t know, but she says that it’s better for you to forget her, then she begins to cry. Capitan Tiago wants [398]her to marry that man. So does Padre Damaso, but she doesn’t say either yes or no. This morning when we were talking about you and I said, ‘Suppose he has gone to make love to some other girl?’ she answered, ‘Would that he had!’ and began to cry.”
Ibarra became grave. “Tell Maria that I want to talk with her alone.”

“Alone?” asked Sinang, wrinkling her eyebrows and staring at him.

“Entirely alone, no, but not with that fellow present.”

“It’s rather difficult, but don’t worry, I’ll tell her.”

“When shall I have an answer?”

“Tomorrow come to my house early. Maria doesn’t want to be left alone at all, so we stay with her. Victoria sleeps with her one night and I the other,

and tonight it's my turn. But listen, your secret? Are you going away without telling me?"

"That's right! I was in the town of Los Baños. I'm going to develop some coconut-groves and I'm thinking of putting up an oil-mill. Your father will be my partner."

"Nothing more than that? What a secret!" exclaimed Sinang aloud, in the tone of a cheated usurer. "I thought—"

"Be careful! I don't want you to make it known!"

"Nor do I want to do it," replied Sinang, turning up her nose. "If it were something more important, I would tell my friends. But to buy coconuts! Coconuts! Who's interested in coconuts?" And with extraordinary haste she ran to join her friends.

A few minutes later Ibarra, seeing that the interest of the party could only languish, took his leave. Capitan Tiago wore a bitter-sweet look, Linares was silent and watchful, while the curate with assumed cheerfulness talked of indifferent matters. None of the girls had reappeared.[399]
[Contents]

Chapter LII
The Cards of the Dead and the Shadows

The moon was hidden in a cloudy sky while a cold wind, precursor of the approaching December, swept the dry leaves and dust about in the narrow pathway leading to the cemetery. Three shadowy forms were conversing in low tones under the arch of the gateway.

“Have you spoken to Elias?” asked a voice.

“No, you know how reserved and circumspect he is. But he ought to be one of us. Don Crisostomo saved his life.”

“That’s why I joined,” said the first voice. “Don Crisostomo had my wife cured in the house of a doctor in Manila. I’ll look after the convento to settle some old scores with the curate.”

“And we’ll take care of the barracks to show the civil-guards that our father had sons.”

“How many of us will there be?”

“Five, and five will be enough. Don Crisostomo’s servant, though, says there’ll be twenty of us.”

“What if you don’t succeed?”

“Hist!” exclaimed one of the shadows, and all fell silent.

In the semi-obscurity a shadowy figure was seen to approach, sneaking along by the fence. From time to time it stopped as if to look back. Nor was reason for this movement lacking, since some twenty paces behind it came another figure, larger and apparently darker than the first, but so lightly did it touch the ground that it vanished as rapidly as though the earth had swallowed it every time the first shadow paused and turned.

[400]“They’re following me,” muttered the first figure. “Can it be the civil-guards? Did the senior sacristan lie?”
“They said that they would meet here,” thought the second shadow. “Some mischief must be on foot when the two brothers conceal it from me.”

At length the first shadow reached the gateway of the cemetery. The three who were already there stepped forward.

“Is that you?”

“Is that you?”

“We must scatter, for they’ve followed me. Tomorrow you’ll get the arms and tomorrow night is the time. The cry is, ‘Viva Don Crisostomo!’ Go!”

The three shadows disappeared behind the stone walls. The later arrival hid in the hollow of the gateway and waited silently. “Let’s see who’s following me,” he thought.

The second shadow came up very cautiously and paused as if to look about him. “I’m late,” he muttered, “but perhaps they will return.”

A thin fine rain, which threatened to last, began to fall, so it occurred to him to take refuge under the gateway. Naturally, he ran against the other.

“Ah! Who are you?” asked the latest arrival in a rough tone.

“Who are you?” returned the other calmly, after which there followed a moment’s pause as each tried to recognize the other’s voice and to make out his features.

“What are you waiting here for?” asked he of the rough voice.

“For the clock to strike eight so that I can play cards with the dead. I want to win something tonight,” answered the other in a natural tone. “And you, what have you come for?”

“For—for the same purpose.”

“*Abá!* I’m glad of that, I’ll not be alone. I’ve [401]brought cards. At the first stroke of the bell I’ll make the lay, at the second I’ll deal. The cards that move are the cards of the dead and we’ll have to cut for them. Have you brought cards?”
“No.”

“Then how—”

“It’s simple enough—just as you’re going to deal for them, so I expect them to play for me.”

“But what if the dead don’t play?”

“What can we do? Gambling hasn’t yet been made compulsory among the dead.”

A short silence ensued.

“Are you armed? How are you going to fight with the dead?”

“With my fists,” answered the larger of the two.

“Oh, the devil! Now I remember—the dead won’t bet when there’s more than one living person, and there are two of us.”

“Is that right? Well, I don’t want to leave.”

“Nor I. I’m short of money,” answered the smaller. “But let’s do this: let’s play for it, the one who loses to leave.”

“All right,” agreed the other, rather ungraciously. “Then let’s get inside. Have you any matches?” They went in to seek in the semi-obscurity for a suitable place and soon found a niche in which they could sit. The shorter took some cards from his salakot, while the other struck a match, in the light from which they stared at each other, but, from the expressions on their faces, apparently without recognition. Nevertheless, we can recognize in the taller and deep-voiced one Elias and in the shorter one, from the scar on his cheek, Lucas.

“Cut!” called Lucas, still staring at the other. He pushed aside some bones that were in the niche and dealt an ace and a jack.

Elias lighted match after match. “On the jack!” he [402]said, and to indicate the card placed a vertebra on top of it.
“Play!” called Lucas, as he dealt an ace with the fourth or fifth card. “You’ve lost,” he added. “Now leave me alone so that I can try to make a raise.”

Elias moved away without a word and was soon swallowed up in the darkness.

Several minutes later the church-clock struck eight and the bell announced the hour of the souls, but Lucas invited no one to play nor did he call on the dead, as the superstition directs; instead, he took off his hat and muttered a few prayers, crossing and recrossing himself with the same fervor with which, at that same moment, the leader of the Brotherhood of the Holy Rosary was going through a similar performance.

Throughout the night a drizzling rain continued to fall. By nine o'clock the streets were dark and solitary. The coconut-oil lanterns, which the inhabitants were required to hang out, scarcely illuminated a small circle around each, seeming to be lighted only to render the darkness more apparent. Two civil-guards paced back and forth in the street near the church.

"It's cold!" said one in Tagalog with a Visayan accent. "We haven't caught any sacristan, so there is no one to repair the alferez's chicken-coop. They're all scared out by the death of that other one. This makes me tired."

"Me, too," answered the other. "No one commits robbery, no one raises a disturbance, but, thank God, they say that Elias is in town. The alferez says that whoever catches him will be exempt from floggings for three months."

"Aha! Do you remember his description?" asked the Visayan.

"I should say so! Height: tall, according to the alferez, medium, according to Padre Damaso; color, brown; eyes, black; nose, ordinary; beard, none; hair, black."

"Aha! But special marks?"

"Black shirt, black pantaloons, wood-cutter."

[403]"Aha, he won't get away from me! I think I see him now."
"I wouldn't mistake him for any one else, even though he might look like him."

Thus the two soldiers continued on their round.

By the light of the lanterns we may again see two shadowy figures moving cautiously along, one behind the other. An energetic "*Quién vive?*" stops both, and the first answers, "*España!*" in a trembling voice.

The soldiers seize him and hustle him toward a lantern to examine him. It is Lucas, but the soldiers seem to be in doubt, questioning each other with their eyes.

“The alferez didn’t say that he had a scar,” whispered the Visayan. “Where you going?”

“To order a mass for tomorrow.”

“Haven’t you seen Elias?”

“I don’t know him, sir,” answered Lucas.

“I didn’t ask you if you know him, you fool! Neither do we know him. I’m asking you if you’ve seen him.”

“No, sir.”

“Listen, I’ll describe him: Height, sometimes tall, sometimes medium; hair and eyes, black; all the other features, ordinary,” recited the Visayan. “Now do you know him?”

“No, sir,” replied Lucas stupidly.

“Then get away from here! Brute! Dolt!” And they gave him a shove.

“Do you know why Elias is tall to the alferez and of medium height to the curate?” asked the Tagalog thoughtfully.

“No,” answered the Visayan.

“Because the alferez was down in the mudhole when he saw him and the curate was on foot.”

“That’s right!” exclaimed the Visayan. “You’re talented—blow is it that you’re a civil-guard?”

“I wasn’t always one; I was a smuggler,” answered the Tagalog with a touch of pride.

[404]But another shadowy figure diverted their attention. They challenged this one also and took the man to the light.
This time it was the real Elias.

“Where you going?”

“To look for a man, sir, who beat and threatened my brother. He has a scar on his face and is called Elias.”

“Aha!” exclaimed the two guards, gazing at each other in astonishment, as they started on the run toward the church, where Lucas had disappeared a few moments before.[405]
[Contents]

Chapter LIII
Il Buon Dí Si Conosce Da Mattina[1]

Early the next morning the report spread through the town that many lights had been seen in the cemetery on the previous night. The leader of the Venerable Tertiary Order spoke of lighted candles, of their shape and size, and, although he could not fix the exact number, had counted more than twenty. Sister Sipa, of the Brotherhood of the Holy Rosary, could not bear the thought that a member of a rival order should alone boast of having seen this divine marvel, so she, even though she did not live near the place, had heard cries and groans, and even thought she recognized by their voices certain persons with whom she, in other times,—but out of Christian charity she not only forgave them but prayed for them and would keep their names secret, for all of which she was declared on the spot to be a saint. Sister Rufa was not so keen of hearing, but she could not suffer that Sister Sipa had heard so much and she nothing, so she related a dream in which there had appeared before her many souls—not only of the dead but even of the living—souls in torment who begged for a part of those indulgences of hers which were so carefully recorded and treasured. She could furnish names to the families interested and only asked for a few alms to succor the Pope in his needs. A little fellow, a herder, who dared to assert that he had seen nothing more than one light and two men in salakots had difficulty in escaping with mere slaps and scoldings. Vainly he swore to it; there were his carabaos with him and could verify his statement. "Do you pretend to know more than the[406]Warden and the Sisters, *paracmason*,[2] heretic?" he was asked amid angry looks. The curate went up into the pulpit and preached about purgatory so fervently that the pesos again flowed forth from their hiding-places to pay for masses.

But let us leave the suffering souls and listen to the conversation between Don Filipo and old Tasio in the lonely home of the latter. The Sage, or Lunatic, was sick, having been for days unable to leave his bed, prostrated by a malady that was rapidly growing worse.

"Really, I don't know whether to congratulate you or not that your resignation has been accepted. Formerly, when the gobernadorcillo so shamelessly disregarded the will of the majority, it was right for you to

tender it, but now that you are engaged in a contest with the Civil Guard it's not quite proper. In time of war you ought to remain at your post."

"Yes, but not when the general sells himself," answered Don Filipo. "You know that on the following morning the gobernadorcillo liberated the soldiers that I had succeeded in arresting and refused to take any further action. Without the consent of my superior officer I could do nothing."

"You alone, nothing; but with the rest, much. You should have taken advantage of this opportunity to set an example to the other towns. Above the ridiculous authority of the gobernadorcillo are the rights of the people. It was the beginning of a good lesson and you have neglected it."

"But what could I have done against the representative of the interests? Here you have Señor Ibarra, he has bowed before the beliefs of the crowd. Do you think that he believes in excommunications?"

"You are not in the same fix. Señor Ibarra is trying to sow the good seed, and to do so he must bend himself and make what use he can of the material at hand. Your [407]mission was to stir things up, and for that purpose initiative and force are required. Besides, the fight should not be considered as merely against the gobernadorcillo. The principle ought to be, against him who makes wrong use of his authority, against him who disturbs the public peace, against him who fails in his duty. You would not have been alone, for the country is not the same now that it was twenty years ago."
"Do you think so?" asked Don Filipo.

"Don't you feel it?" rejoined the old man, sitting up in his bed. "Ah, that is because you haven't seen the past, you haven't studied the effect of European immigration, of the coming of new books, and of the movement of our youth to Europe. Examine and compare these facts. It is true that the Royal and Pontifical University of Santo Tomas, with its most sapient faculty, still exists and that some intelligences are yet exercised in formulating distinctions and in penetrating the subtleties of scholasticism; but where will you now find the metaphysical youth of our days, with their archaic education, who tortured their brains and died in full pursuit of sophistries in some corner of the provinces, without ever having succeeded in understanding the attributes of *being*, or solving the problem of*essence* and *existence*, those lofty concepts that made us forget what was

essential,—our own existence and our own individuality? Look at the youth of today! Full of enthusiasm at the view of a wider horizon, they study history, mathematics, geography, literature, physical sciences, languages—all subjects that in our times we heard mentioned with horror, as though they were heresies. The greatest free-thinker of my day declared them inferior to the classifications of Aristotle and the laws of the syllogism. Man has at last comprehended that he is man; he has given up analyzing his God and searching into the imperceptible, into what he has not seen; he has given up framing laws for the phantasms of his brain; he comprehends that his heritage is the vast world, dominion over which is within [408]his reach; weary of his useless and presumptuous toil, he lowers his head and examines what surrounds him. See how poets are now springing up among us! The Muses of Nature are gradually opening up their treasures to us and begin to smile in encouragement on our efforts; the experimental sciences have already borne their first-fruits; time only is lacking for their development. The lawyers of today are being trained in the new forms of the philosophy of law, some of them begin to shine in the midst of the shadows which surround our courts of justice, indicating a change in the course of affairs. Hear how the youth talk, visit the centers of learning! Other names resound within the walls of the schools, there where we heard only those of St. Thomas, Suarez, Amat, Sanchez,[3] and others who were the idols of our times. In vain do the friars cry out from the pulpits against our demoralization, as the fish-venders cry out against the cupidity of their customers, disregarding the fact that their wares are stale and unserviceable! In vain do the conventos extend their ramifications to check the new current. The gods are going! The roots of the tree may weaken the plants that support themselves under it, but they cannot take away life from those other beings, which, like birds, are soaring toward the sky."

The Sage spoke with animation, his eyes gleamed.

"Still, the new seed is small," objected Don Filipo incredulously. "If all enter upon the progress we purchase so dearly, it may be stifled."

"Stifled! Who will stifle it? Man, that weak dwarf, stifle progress, the powerful child of time and action? When has he been able to do so? Bigotry, the gibbet, the stake, by endeavoring to stifle it, have hurried it along. *E pur si muove*,[4] said Galileo, when the Dominicans forced him to declare that the earth does not move, and the same statement might be

applied to human progress. Some wills [409]are broken down, some individuals sacrificed, but that is of little import; progress continues on its way, and from the blood of those who fall new and vigorous offspring is born. See, the press itself, however backward it may wish to be, is taking a step forward. The Dominicans themselves do not escape the operation of this law, but are imitating the Jesuits, their irreconcilable enemies. They hold fiestas in their cloisters, they erect little theaters, they compose poems, because, as they are not devoid of intelligence in spite of believing in the fifteenth century, they realize that the Jesuits are right, and they will still take part in the future of the younger peoples that they have reared."
"So, according to you, the Jesuits keep up with progress?" asked Don Filipo in wonder. "Why, then, are they opposed in Europe?"

"I will answer you like an old scholastic," replied the Sage, lying down again and resuming his jesting expression. "There are three ways in which one may accompany the course of progress: in front of, beside, or behind it. The first guide it, the second suffer themselves to be carried along with it, and the last are dragged after it and to these last the Jesuits belong. They would like to direct it, but as they see that it is strong and has other tendencies, they capitulate, preferring to follow rather than to be crushed or left alone among the shadows by the wayside. Well now, we in the Philippines are moving along at least three centuries behind the car of progress; we are barely beginning to emerge from the Middle Ages. Hence the Jesuits, who are reactionary in Europe, when seen from our point of view, represent progress. To them the Philippines owes her dawning system of instruction in the natural sciences, the soul of the nineteenth century, as she owed to the Dominicans scholasticism, already dead in spite of Leo XIII, for there is no Pope who can revive what common sense has judged and condemned.

"But where are we getting to?" he asked with a change [410]of tone. "Ah, we were speaking of the present condition of the Philippines. Yes, we are now entering upon a period of strife, or rather, I should say that you are, for my generation belongs to the night, we are passing away. This strife is between the past, which seizes and strives with curses to cling to the tottering feudal castle, and the future, whose song of triumph may be heard from afar amid the splendors of the coming dawn, bringing the message of Good-News from other lands. Who will fall and be buried in the moldering ruins?"

The old man paused. Noticing that Don Filipo was gazing at him thoughtfully, he said with a smile, “I can almost guess what you are thinking.”

“Really?”

“You are thinking of how easily I may be mistaken,” was the answer with a sad smile. “Today I am feverish, and I am not infallible:*homo sum et nihil humani a me alienum puto*,[5] said Terence, and if at any time one is allowed to dream, why not dream pleasantly in the last hours of life? And after all, I have lived only in dreams! You are right, it is a dream! Our youths think only of love affairs and dissipations; they expend more time and work harder to deceive and dishonor a maiden than in thinking about the welfare of their country; our women, in order to care for the house and family of God, neglect their own: our men are active only in vice and heroic only in shame; childhood develops amid ignorance and routine, youth lives its best years without ideals, and a sterile manhood serves only as an example for corrupting youth. Gladly do I die! *Claudite iam rivos, pueri!*”[6]

“Don’t you want some medicine?” asked Don Filipo in order to change the course of the conversation, which had darkened the old man’s face.

[411]“The dying need no medicines; you who remain need them. Tell Don Crisostomo to come and see me tomorrow, for I have some important things to say to him. In a few days I am going away. The Philippines is in darkness!”

After a few moments more of talk, Don Filipo left the sick man’s house, grave and thoughtful.[412]

[1]The fair day is foretold by the morn.

[2]*Paracmason*, i.e. freemason.

[3]Scholastic theologians.—TR.

[4]And yet it does move!

[5]I am a man and nothing that concerns humanity do I consider foreign to me.

[6]A portion of the closing words of Virgil’s third eclogue, equivalent here to “Let the curtain drop.”—TR.

[Contents]

Chapter LIV
Revelations

Quidquid latet, adparebit,
Nil inultum remanebit.1

The vesper bells are ringing, and at the holy sound all pause, drop their tasks, and uncover. The laborer returning from the fields ceases the song with which he was pacing his carabao and murmurs a prayer, the women in the street cross themselves and move their lips affectedly so that none may doubt their piety, a man stops caressing his game-cock and recites the angelus to bring better luck, while inside the houses they pray aloud. Every sound but that of the Ave Maria dies away, becomes hushed.

Nevertheless, the curate, without his hat, rushes across the street, to the scandalizing of many old women, and, greater scandal still, directs his steps toward the house of the alferez. The devout women then think it time to cease the movement of their lips in order to kiss the curate's hand, but Padre Salvi takes no notice of them. This evening he finds no pleasure in placing his bony hand on his Christian nose that he may slip it down dissemblingly (as Doña Consolacion has observed) over the bosom of the attractive young woman who may have bent over to receive his blessing. Some important matter must be engaging his attention when he thus forgets his own interests and those of the Church!

[413]In fact, he rushes headlong up the stairway and knocks impatiently at the alferez's door. The latter puts in his appearance, scowling, followed by his better half, who smiles like one of the damned.

"Ah, Padre, I was just going over to see you. That old goat of yours—"

"I have a very important matter—"

"I can't stand for his running about and breaking down the fence. I'll shoot him if he comes back!"

"That is, if you are alive tomorrow!" exclaimed the panting curate as he made his way toward the sala.

"What, do you think that puny doll will kill me? I'll bust him with a kick!"

Padre Salvi stepped backward with an involuntary glance toward the alferez's feet. "Whom are you talking about?" he asked tremblingly.

"About whom would I talk but that simpleton who has challenged me to a duel with revolvers at a hundred paces?"

"Ah!" sighed the curate, then he added, "I've come to talk to you about a very urgent matter."

"Enough of urgent matters! It'll be like that affair of the two boys."

Had the light been other than from coconut oil and the lamp globe not so dirty, the alferez would have noticed the curate's pallor.

"Now this is a serious matter, which concerns the lives of all of us," declared Padre Salvi in a low voice.

"A serious matter?" echoed the alferez, turning pale. "Can that boy shoot straight?"

"I'm not talking about him."

"Then, what?"

The friar made a sign toward the door, which the alferez closed in his own way—with a kick, for he had found his hands superfluous and had lost nothing by ceasing to be bimanous.

[414]A curse and a roar sounded outside. "Brute, you've split my forehead open!" yelled his wife.
"Now, unburden yourself," he said calmly to the curate.

The latter stared at him for a space, then asked in the nasal, droning voice of the preacher, "Didn't you see me come—running?"

"Sure! I thought you'd lost something."

"Well, now," continued the curate, without heeding the alferez's rudeness, "when I fail thus in my duty, it's because there are grave reasons."

"Well, what else?" asked the other, tapping the floor with his foot.

"Be calm!"

“Then why did you come in such a hurry?”

The curate drew nearer to him and asked mysteriously, “Haven’t—you—heard—anything?”

The alferez shrugged his shoulders.

“You admit that you know absolutely nothing?”

“Do you want to talk about Elias, who put away your senior sacristan last night?” was the retort.

“No, I’m not talking about those matters,” answered the curate ill-naturedly. “I’m talking about a great danger.”

“Well, damn it, out with it!”

“Come,” said the friar slowly and disdainfully, “you see once more how important we ecclesiastics are. The meanest lay brother is worth as much as a regiment, while a curate—”

Then he added in a low and mysterious tone, “I’ve discovered a big conspiracy!”

The alferez started up and gazed in astonishment at the friar.

“A terrible and well-organized plot, which will be carried out this very night.”

“This very night!” exclaimed the alferez, pushing the curate aside and running to his revolver and sword hanging on the wall.

[415]“Who’ll I arrest? Who’ll I arrest?” he cried.
“Calm yourself! There is still time, thanks to the promptness with which I have acted. We have till eight o’clock.”

“I’ll shoot all of them!”

“Listen*!* This afternoon a woman whose name I can’t reveal (it’s a secret of the confessional) came to me and told everything. At eight o’clock they will seize the barracks by surprise, plunder the convento, capture the police boat, and murder all of us Spaniards.”

The alferez was stupefied.

“The woman did not tell me any more than this,” added the curate.

“She didn’t tell any more? Then I’ll arrest her!”

“I can’t consent to that. The bar of penitence is the throne of the God of mercies.”

“There’s neither God nor mercies that amount to anything! I’ll arrest her!”

“You’re losing your head! What you must do is to get yourself ready. Muster your soldiers quietly and put them in ambush, send me four guards for the convento, and notify the men in charge of the boat.”

“The boat isn’t here. I’ll ask for help from the other sections.”

“No, for then the plotters would be warned and would not carry out their plans. What we must do is to catch them alive and make them talk—I mean, you’ll make them talk, since I, as a priest, must not meddle in such matters. Listen, here’s where you win crosses and stars. I ask only that you make due acknowledgment that it was I who warned you.”

“It’ll be acknowledged, Padre, it’ll be acknowledged—and perhaps you’ll get a miter!” answered the glowing alferez, glancing at the cuffs of his uniform.

“So, you send me four guards in plain clothes, eh? Be discreet, and tonight at eight o’clock it’ll rain stars and crosses.”

[416]While all this was taking place, a man ran along the road leading to Ibarra’s house and rushed up the stairway.
“Is your master here?” the voice of Elias called to a servant.

“He’s in his study at work.”

Ibarra, to divert the impatience that he felt while waiting for the time when he could make his explanations to Maria Clara, had set himself to work in his laboratory.

“Ah, that you, Elias?” he exclaimed. “I was thinking about you. Yesterday I forgot to ask you the name of that Spaniard in whose house your grandfather lived.”

“Let’s not talk about me, sir—”

“Look,” continued Ibarra, not noticing the youth’s agitation, while he placed a piece of bamboo over a flame, “I’ve made a great discovery. This bamboo is incombustible.”

“It’s not a question of bamboo now, sir, it’s a question of your collecting your papers and fleeing at this very moment.”

Ibarra glanced at him in surprise and, on seeing the gravity of his countenance, dropped the object that he held in his hands.

“Burn everything that may compromise you and within an hour put yourself in a place of safety.”

“Why?” Ibarra was at length able to ask.

“Put all your valuables in a safe place—”

“Why?”

“Burn every letter written by you or to you—the most innocent thing may be wrongly construed—”

“But why all this?”

“Why! Because I’ve just discovered a plot that is to be attributed to you in order to ruin you.”

“A plot? Who is forming it?”

“I haven’t been able to discover the author of it, but just a moment ago I talked with one of the poor dupes who are paid to carry it out, and I wasn’t able to dissuade him.”

[417]“But he—didn’t he tell you who is paying him?”
“Yes! Under a pledge of secrecy he said that it was you.”

“My God!” exclaimed the terrified Ibarra.

“There’s no doubt of it, sir. Don’t lose any time, for the plot will probably be carried out this very night.”

Ibarra, with his hands on his head and his eyes staring unnaturally, seemed not to hear him.

“The blow cannot be averted,” continued Elias. “I’ve come late, I don’t know who the leaders are. Save yourself, sir, save yourself for your country’s sake!”

“Whither shall I flee? She expects me tonight!” exclaimed Ibarra, thinking of Maria Clara.

“To any town whatsoever, to Manila, to the house of some official, but anywhere so that they may not say that you are directing this movement.”

“Suppose that I myself report the plot?”

“You an informer!” exclaimed Elias, stepping back and staring at him. “You would appear as a traitor and coward in the eyes of the plotters and faint-hearted in the eyes of others. They would say that you planned the whole thing to curry favor. They would say—”

“But what’s to be done?”

“I’ve already told you. Destroy every document that relates to your affairs, flee, and await the outcome.”

“And Maria Clara?” exclaimed the young man. “No, I’ll die first!”

Elias wrung his hands, saying, “Well then, at least parry the blow. Prepare for the time when they accuse you.”

Ibarra gazed about him in bewilderment. “Then help me. There in that writing-desk are all the letters of my family. Select those of my father, which are perhaps the ones that may compromise me. Read the signatures.”

So the bewildered and stupefied young man opened and shut boxes, collected papers, read letters hurriedly, tearing [418]up some and laying others aside. He took down some books and began to turn their leaves.
Elias did the same, if not so excitedly, yet with equal eagerness. But suddenly he paused, his eyes bulged, he turned the paper in his hand over and over, then asked in a trembling voice:

“Was your family acquainted with Don Pedro Eibarramendia?”

“I should say so!” answered Ibarra, as he opened a chest and took out a bundle of papers. “He was my great-grandfather.”

“Your great-grandfather Don Pedro Eibarramendia?” again asked Elias with changed and livid features.

“Yes,” replied Ibarra absently, “we shortened the surname; it was too long.”

“Was he a Basque?” demanded Elias, approaching him.

“Yes, a Basque—but what’s the matter?” asked Ibarra in surprise.

Clenching his fists and pressing them to his forehead, Elias glared at Crisostomo, who recoiled when he saw the expression on the other’s face. “Do you know who Don Pedro Eibarramendia was?” he asked between his teeth. “Don Pedro Eibarramendia was the villain who falsely accused my grandfather and caused all our misfortunes. I have sought for that name and God has revealed it to me! Render me now an accounting for our misfortunes!”

Elias caught and shook the arm of Crisostomo, who gazed at him in terror. In a voice that was bitter and trembling with hate, he said, “Look at me well, look at one who has suffered and you live, you live, you have wealth, a home, reputation—you live, you live!”

Beside himself, he ran to a small collection of arms and snatched up a dagger. But scarcely had he done so when he let it fall again and stared like a madman at the motionless Ibarra.

“What was I about to do?” he muttered, fleeing from the house.[419]

1“Whatever is hidden will be revealed, nothing will remain unaccounted for.” From *Dies Irae*, the hymn in the mass for the dead, best known to English readers from the paraphrase of it in Scott’s *Lay of the Last Minstrel*. The lines here quoted were thus metrically translated by Macaulay:

> “What was distant shall be near,
> What was hidden shall be clear.”—TR.

[Contents]

Chapter LV
The Catastrophe

There in the dining-room Capitan Tiago, Linares, and Aunt Isabel were at supper, so that even in the sala the rattling of plates and dishes was plainly heard. Maria Clara had said that she was not hungry and had seated herself at the piano in company with the merry Sinang, who was murmuring mysterious words into her ear. Meanwhile Padre Salvi paced nervously back and forth in the room.

It was not, indeed, that the convalescent was not hungry, no; but she was expecting the arrival of a certain person and was taking advantage of this moment when her Argus was not present, Linares' supper-hour.

"You'll see how that specter will stay till eight," murmured Sinang, indicating the curate. "And at eight *he* will come. The curate's in love with Linares."

Maria Clara gazed in consternation at her friend, who went on heedlessly with her terrible chatter: "Oh, I know why he doesn't go, in spite of my hints—he doesn't want to burn up oil in the convento! Don't you know that since you've been sick the two lamps that he used to keep lighted he has had put out? But look how he stares, and what a face!"

At that moment a clock in the house struck eight. The curate shuddered and sat down in a corner.

"Here he comes!" exclaimed Sinang, pinching Maria Clara. "Don't you hear him?"

The church bell boomed out the hour of eight and all rose to pray. Padre Salvi offered up a prayer in a weak [420]and trembling voice, but as each was busy with his own thoughts no one paid any attention to the priest's agitation.

Scarcely had the prayer ceased when Ibarra appeared. The youth was in mourning not only in his attire but also in his face, to such an extent that, on seeing him, Maria Clara arose and took a step toward him to ask what the matter was. But at that instant the report of firearms was heard. Ibarra stopped, his eyes rolled, he lost the power of speech. The curate had

concealed himself behind a post. More shots, more reports were heard from the direction of the convento, followed by cries and the sound of persons running. Capitan Tiago, Aunt Isabel, and Linares rushed in pell-mell, crying, “Tulisan! Tulisan!” Andeng followed, flourishing the gridiron as she ran toward her foster-sister.

Aunt Isabel fell on her knees weeping and reciting the *Kyrie eleyson*; Capitan Tiago, pale and trembling, carried on his fork a chicken-liver which he offered tearfully to the Virgin of Antipolo; Linares with his mouth full of food was armed with a case-knife; Sinang and Maria Clara were in each other’s arms; while the only one that remained motionless, as if petrified, was Crisostomo, whose paleness was indescribable.

The cries and sound of blows continued, windows were closed noisily, the report of a gun was heard from time to time.

“*Christie eleyson!* Santiago, let the prophecy be fulfilled! Shut the windows!” groaned Aunt Isabel.

“Fifty big bombs and two thanksgiving masses!” responded Capitan Tiago. “*Ora pro nobis!*”

Gradually there prevailed a heavy silence which was soon broken by the voice of the alferez, calling as he ran: “Padre, Padre Salvi, come here!”

“*Miserere!* The alferez is calling for confession,” cried Aunt Isabel. “The alferez is wounded?” asked Linares hastily. [421]“Ah!!!” Only then did he notice that he had not yet swallowed what he had in his mouth.
“Padre, come here! There’s nothing more to fear!” the alferez continued to call out.

The pallid Fray Salvi at last concluded to venture out from his hiding-place, and went down the stairs.

“The outlaws have killed the alferez! Maria, Sinang, go into your room and fasten the door! *Kyrie eleyson!*”

Ibarra also turned toward the stairway, in spite of Aunt Isabel’s cries: “Don’t go out, you haven’t been shriven, don’t go out!” The good old lady had been a particular friend of his mother’s.

But Ibarra left the house. Everything seemed to reel around him, the ground was unstable. His ears buzzed, his legs moved heavily and irregularly. Waves of blood, lights and shadows chased one another before his eyes, and in spite of the bright moonlight he stumbled over the stones and blocks of wood in the vacant and deserted street.

Near the barracks he saw soldiers, with bayonets fixed, who were talking among themselves so excitedly that he passed them unnoticed. In the town hall were to be heard blows, cries, and curses, with the voice of the alferez dominating everything: “To the stocks! Handcuff them! Shoot any one who moves! Sergeant, mount the guard! Today no one shall walk about, not even God! Captain, this is no time to go to sleep!”

Ibarra hastened his steps toward home, where his servants were anxiously awaiting him. “Saddle the best horse and go to bed!” he ordered them.

Going into his study, he hastily packed a traveling-bag, opened an iron safe, took out what money he found there and put it into some sacks. Then he collected his jewels, took clown a portrait of Maria Clara, armed himself with a dagger and two revolvers, and turned toward a closet where he kept his instruments.

At that moment three heavy knocks sounded on the door. “Who’s there?” asked Ibarra in a gloomy tone.

[422]“Open, in the King’s name, open at once, or we’ll break the door down,” answered an imperious voice in Spanish.
Ibarra looked toward the window, his eyes gleamed, and he cocked his revolver. Then changing his mind, he put the weapons down and went to open the door just as the servant appeared. Three guards instantly seized him.

“Consider yourself a prisoner in the King’s name,” said the sergeant.

“For what?”

“They’ll tell you over there. We’re forbidden to say.” The youth reflected a moment and then, perhaps not wishing that the soldiers should discover his preparations for flight, picked up his hat, saying, “I’m at your service. I suppose that it will only be for a few hours.”

“If you promise not to try to escape, we won’t tie you the alferez grants this favor—but if you run—”

Ibarra went with them, leaving his servants in consternation.

Meanwhile, what had become of Elias? Leaving the house of Crisostomo, he had run like one crazed, without heeding where he was going. He crossed the fields in violent agitation, he reached the woods; he fled from the town, from the light—even the moon so troubled him that he plunged into the mysterious shadows of the trees. There, sometimes pausing, sometimes moving along unfrequented paths, supporting himself on the hoary trunks or being entangled in the undergrowth, he gazed toward the town, which, bathed in the light of the moon, spread out before him on the plain along the shore of the lake. Birds awakened from their sleep flew about, huge bats and owls moved from branch to branch with strident cries and gazed at him with their round eyes, but Elias neither heard nor heeded them. In his fancy he was followed by the offended shades of his family, he saw on every branch the gruesome basket containing Balat’s gory head, as his father had described it to him; at every tree he seemed to stumble over the [423]corpse of his grandmother; he imagined that he saw the rotting skeleton of his dishonored grandfather swinging among the shadows—and the skeleton and the corpse and the gory head cried after him, “Coward! Coward!”

Leaving the hill, Elias descended to the lake and ran along the shore excitedly. There at a distance in the midst of the waters, where the moonlight seemed to form a cloud, he thought he could see a specter rise and soar the shade of his sister with her breast bloody and her loose hair streaming about. He fell to his knees on the sand and extending his arms cried out, “You, too!”

Then with his gaze fixed on the cloud he arose slowly and went forward into the water as if he were following some one. He passed over the gentle slope that forms the bar and was soon far from the shore. The water rose to his waist, but he plunged on like one fascinated, following, ever following, the ghostly charmer. Now the water covered his chest—a volley of rifle-shots sounded, the vision disappeared, the youth returned to his senses. In the stillness of the night and the greater density of the air the reports reached him clearly and distinctly. He stopped to reflect and found himself

in the water—over the peaceful ripples of the lake he could still make out the lights in the fishermen's huts.

He returned to the shore and started toward the town, but for what purpose he himself knew not. The streets appeared to be deserted, the houses were closed, and even the dogs that were wont to bark through the night had hidden themselves in fear. The silvery light of the moon added to the sadness and loneliness.

Fearful of meeting the civil-guards, he made his way along through yards and gardens, in one of which he thought he could discern two human figures, but he kept on his way, leaping over fences and walls, until after great labor he reached the other end of the town and went toward Crisostomo's house. In the doorway were the servants, lamenting their master's arrest.

[424]After learning about what had occurred Elias pretended to go away, but really went around behind the house, jumped over the wall, and crawled through a window into the study where the candle that Ibarra had lighted was still burning. He saw the books and papers and found the arms, the jewels, and the sacks of money. Reconstructing in his imagination the scene that had taken place there and seeing so many papers that might be of a compromising nature, he decided to gather them up, throw them from the window, and bury them.
But, on glancing toward the street, he saw two guards approaching, their bayonets and caps gleaming in the moonlight. With them was the directorcillo. He made a sudden resolution: throwing the papers and some clothing into a heap in the center of the room, he poured over them the oil from a lamp and set fire to the whole. He was hurriedly placing the arms in his belt when he caught sight of the portrait of Maria Clara and hesitated a moment, then thrust it into one of the sacks and with them in his hands leaped from the window into the garden.

It was time that he did so, too, for the guards were forcing an entrance. "Let us in to get your master's papers!" cried the directorcillo.

"Have you permission? If you haven't, you won't get in,'" answered an old man.

But the soldiers pushed him aside with the butts of their rifles and ran up the stairway, just as a thick cloud of smoke rolled through the house and long tongues of flame shot out from the study, enveloping the doors and windows.

“Fire! Fire!” was the cry, as each rushed to save what he could. But the blaze had reached the little laboratory and caught the inflammable materials there, so the guards had to retire. The flames roared about, licking up everything in their way and cutting off the passages. Vainly was water brought from the well and cries for help [425]raised, for the house was set apart from the rest. The fire swept through all the rooms and sent toward the sky thick spirals of smoke. Soon the whole structure was at the mercy of the flames, fanned now by the wind, which in the heat grew stronger. Some few rustics came up, but only to gaze on this great bonfire, the end of that old building which had been so long respected by the elements.[426]

[Contents]

Chapter LVI
Rumors and Beliefs

Day dawned at last for the terrified town. The streets near the barracks and the town hail were still deserted and solitary, the houses showed no signs of life. Nevertheless, the wooden panel of a window was pushed back noisily and a child's head was stretched out and turned from side to side, gazing about in all directions. At once, however, a smack indicated the contact of tanned hide with the soft human article, so the child made a wry face, closed its eyes, and disappeared. The window slammed shut.

But an example had been set. That opening and shutting of the window had no doubt been heard on all sides, for soon another window opened slowly and there appeared cautiously the head of a wrinkled and toothless old woman: it was the same Sister Puté who had raised such a disturbance while Padre Damaso was preaching. Children and old women are the representatives of curiosity in this world: the former from a wish to know things and the latter from a desire to recollect them.

Apparently there was no one to apply a slipper to Sister Puté, for she remained gazing out into the distance with wrinkled eyebrows. Then she rinsed out her mouth, spat noisily, and crossed herself. In the house opposite, another window was now timidly opened to reveal Sister Rufa, she who did not wish to cheat or be cheated. They stared at each other for a moment, smiled, made some signs, and again crossed themselves.

"*Jesús*, it seemed like a thanksgiving mass, regular fireworks!" commented Sister Rufa.

[427]"Since the town was sacked by Balat, I've never seen another night equal to it," responded Sister Puté.
"What a lot of shots! They say that it was old Pablo's band."

"Tulisanes? That can't be! They say that it was the cuadrilleros against the civil-guards. That's why Don Filipo has been arrested."

"*Sanctus Deus!* They say that at least fourteen were killed."

Other windows were now opened and more faces appeared to exchange greetings and make comments. In the clear light, which promised a bright day, soldiers could be seen in the distance, coming and going confusedly like gray silhouettes.

“There goes one more corpse!” was the exclamation from a window.

“One? I see two.”

“And I—but really, can it be you don’t know what it was?” asked a sly-featured individual.

“Oh, the cuadrilleros!”

“No, sir, it was a mutiny in the barracks!”

“What kind of mutiny? The curate against the alferez?”

“No, it was nothing of the kind,” answered the man who had asked the first question. “It was the Chinamen who have rebelled.” With this he shut his window.

“The Chinamen!” echoed all in great astonishment. “That’s why not one of them is to be seen!” “They’ve probably killed them all!”

“I thought they were going to do something bad. Yesterday—”

“I saw it myself. Last night—”

“What a pity!” exclaimed Sister Rufa. “To get killed just before Christmas when they bring around their presents! They should have waited until New Year’s.”

Little by little the street awoke to life. Dogs, chickens, pigs, and doves began the movement, and these animals [428]were soon followed by some ragged urchins who held fast to each other’s arms as they timidly approached the barracks. Then a few old women with handkerchiefs tied about their heads and fastened under their chins appeared with thick rosaries in their hands, pretending to be at their prayers so that the soldiers would let them pass. When it was seen that one might walk about without being shot at, the men began to come out with assumed airs of indifference. First they limited their steps to the neighborhood of their houses, caressing

their game-cocks, then they extended their stroll, stopping from time to time, until at last they stood in front of the town hall.
In a quarter of an hour other versions of the affair were in circulation. Ibarra with his servants had tried to kidnap Maria Clara, and Capitan Tiago had defended her, aided by the Civil Guard. The number of killed was now not fourteen but thirty. Capitan Tiago was wounded and would leave that very day with his family for Manila.

The arrival of two cuadrilleros carrying a human form on a covered stretcher and followed by a civil-guard produced a great sensation. It was conjectured that they came from the convento, and, from the shape of the feet, which were dangling over one end, some guessed who the dead man might be, some one else a little distance away told who it was; further on the corpse was multiplied and the mystery of the Holy Trinity duplicated, later the miracle of the loaves and fishes was repeated—and the dead were then thirty and eight.

By half-past seven, when other guards arrived from neighboring towns, the current version was clear and detailed. “I’ve just come from the town hall, where I’ve seen Don Filipo and Don Crisostomo prisoners,” a man told Sister Puté. “I’ve talked with one of the cuadrilleros who are on guard. Well, Bruno, the son of that fellow who was flogged to death, confessed everything last night. As you know, Capitan Tiago is going to marry his daughter to the young Spaniard, so Don Crisostomo in his rage [429]wanted to get revenge and tried to kill all the Spaniards, even the curate. Last night they attacked the barracks and the convento, but fortunately, by God’s mercy, the curate was in Capitan Tiago’s house. They say that a lot of them escaped. The civil-guards burned Don Crisostomo’s house down, and if they hadn’t arrested him first they would have burned him also.”
“They burned the house down?”

“All the servants are under arrest. Look, you can still see the smoke from here!” answered the narrator, approaching the window. “Those who come from there tell of many sad things.”

All looked toward the place indicated. A thin column of smoke was still slowly rising toward the sky. All made comments, more or less pitying, more or less accusing.

“Poor youth!” exclaimed an old man, Puté’s husband.

“Yes,” she answered, “but look how he didn’t order a mass said for the soul of his father, who undoubtedly needs it more than others.”

“But, woman, haven’t you any pity?”

“Pity for the excommunicated? It’s a sin to take pity on the enemies of God, the curates say. Don’t you remember? In the cemetery he walked about as if he was in a corral.”

“But a corral and the cemetery are alike,” replied the old man, “only that into the former only one kind of animal enters.”

“Shut up!” cried Sister Puté. “You’ll still defend those whom God has clearly punished. You’ll see how they’ll arrest you, too. You’re upholding a falling house.”

Her husband became silent before this argument.

“Yes,” continued the old lady, “after striking Padre Damaso there wasn’t anything left for him to do but to kill Padre Salvi.”

“But you can’t deny that he was good when he was a little boy.”

[430]“Yes, he was good,” replied the old woman, “but he went to Spain. All those that go to Spain become heretics, as the curates have said.”
“Oho!” exclaimed her husband, seeing his chance for a retort, “and the curate, and all the curates, and the Archbishop, and the Pope, and the Virgin —aren’t they from Spain? Are they also heretics? *Abá!*”

Happily for Sister Puté the arrival of a maidservant running, all pale and terrified, cut short this discussion.

“A man hanged in the next garden!” she cried breathlessly.

“A man hanged?” exclaimed all in stupefaction. The women crossed themselves. No one could move from his place.

“Yes, sir,” went on the trembling servant; “I was going to pick peas—I looked into our neighbor’s garden to see if it was—I saw a man swinging—I thought it was Teo, the servant who always gives me—I went nearer to—

pick the peas, and I saw that it wasn't Teo, but a dead man. I ran and I ran and—"

"Let's go see him," said the old man, rising. "Show us the way."

"Don't you go!" cried Sister Puté, catching hold of his camisa. "Something will happen to you! Is he hanged? Then the worse for him!"

"Let me see him, woman. You, Juan, go to the barracks and report it. Perhaps he's not dead yet."

So he proceeded to the garden with the servant, who kept behind him. The women, including even Sister Puté herself, followed after, filled with fear and curiosity.

"There he is, sir," said the servant, as she stopped and pointed with her finger.

The committee paused at a respectful distance and allowed the old man to go forward alone.

A human body hanging from the branch of a santol tree swung about gently in the breeze. The old man stared at it for a time and saw that the legs and arms were [431]stiff, the clothing soiled, and the head doubled over.
"We mustn't touch him until some officer of the law arrives," he said aloud. "He's already stiff, he's been dead for some time."

The women gradually moved closer.

"He's the fellow who lived in that little house there. He came here two weeks ago. Look at the scar on his face."

"*Ave Maria!*" exclaimed some of the women.

"Shall we pray for his soul?" asked a young woman, after she had finished staring and examining the body.

"Fool, heretic!" scolded Sister Puté. "Don't you know what Padre Damaso said? It's tempting God to pray for one of the damned. Whoever commits suicide is irrevocably damned and therefore he isn't buried in holy ground."

Then she added, "I knew that this man was coming to a bad end; I never could find out how he lived."

“I saw him twice talking with the senior sacristan,” observed a young woman.

“It wouldn’t be to confess himself or to order a mass!”

Other neighbors came up until a large group surrounded the corpse, which was still swinging about. After half an hour, an alguazil and the directorcillo arrived with two cuadrilleros, who took the body down and placed it on a stretcher.

“People are getting in a hurry to die,” remarked the directorcillo with a smile, as he took a pen from behind his ear.

He made captious inquiries, and took down the statement of the maidservant, whom he tried to confuse, now looking at her fiercely, now threatening her, now attributing to her things that she had not said, so much so that she, thinking that she would have to go to jail, began to cry and wound up by declaring that she wasn’t looking for peas but and she called Teo as a witness.

While this was taking place, a rustic in a wide salakot [432]with a big bandage on his neck was examining the corpse and the rope. The face was not more livid than the rest of the body, two scratches and two red spots were to be seen above the noose, the strands of the rope were white and had no blood on them. The curious rustic carefully examined the camisa and pantaloons, and noticed that they were very dusty and freshly torn in some parts. But what most caught his attention were the seeds of *amores-secos* that were sticking on the camisa even up to the collar.
“What are you looking at?” the directorcillo asked him. “I was looking, sir, to see if I could recognize him,” stammered the rustic, partly uncovering, but in such a way that his salakot fell lower.

“But haven’t you heard that it’s a certain Lucas? Were you asleep?”

The crowd laughed, while the abashed rustic muttered a few words and moved away slowly with his head down.

“Here, where you going?” cried the old man after him.

“That’s not the way out. That’s the way to the dead man’s house.”

“The fellow’s still asleep,” remarked the directorcillo facetiously. “Better pour some water over him.”

Amid the laughter of the bystanders the rustic left the place where he had played such a ridiculous part and went toward the church. In the sacristy he asked for the senior sacristan.

“He’s still asleep,” was the rough answer. “Don’t you know that the convento was assaulted last night?”

“Then I’ll wait till he wakes up.” This with a stupid stare at the sacristans, such as is common to persons who are used to rough treatment.

In a corner which was still in shadow the one-eyed senior sacristan lay asleep in a big chair. His spectacles were placed on his forehead amid long locks of hair, while his thin, squalid chest, which was bare, rose and fell regularly.

The rustic took a seat near by, as if to wait patiently, but he dropped a piece of money and started to look for it [433]with the aid of a candle under the senior sacristan’s chair. He noticed seeds of *amores-secos* on the pantaloons and on the cuffs of the sleeper’s camisa. The latter awoke, rubbed his one good eye, and began to scold the rustic with great ill-humor.
“I wanted to order a mass, sir,” was the reply in a tone of excuse.

“The masses are already over,” said the sacristan, sweetening his tone a little at this. “If you want it for tomorrow—is it for the souls in purgatory?”

“No, sir,” answered the rustic, handing him a peso.

Then gazing fixedly at the single eye, he added, “It’s for a person who’s going to die soon.”

Hereupon he left the sacristy. “I could have caught him last night!” he sighed, as he took off the bandage and stood erect to recover the face and form of Elias.[434]
[Contents]

Chapter LVII
Vae Victis!

Mi gozo en un pozo.

Guards with forbidding mien paced to and fro in front of the door of the town hall, threatening with their rifle-butts the bold urchins who rose on tiptoe or climbed up on one another to see through the bars.

The hall itself did not present that agreeable aspect it wore when the program of the fiesta was under discussion—now it was gloomy and rather ominous. The civil-guards and cuadrilleros who occupied it scarcely spoke and then with few words in low tones. At the table the directorcillo, two clerks, and several soldiers were rustling papers, while the alferez strode from one side to the other, at times gazing fiercely toward the door: prouder Themistocles could not have appeared in the Olympic games after the battle of Salamis. Doña Consolacion yawned in a corner, exhibiting a dirty mouth and jagged teeth, while she fixed her cold, sinister gaze on the door of the jail, which was covered with indecent drawings. She had succeeded in persuading her husband, whose victory had made him amiable, to let her witness the inquiry and perhaps the accompanying tortures. The hyena smelt the carrion and licked herself, wearied by the delay.

The gobernadorcillo was very compunctious. His seat, that large chair placed under his Majesty's portrait, was vacant, being apparently intended for some one else. About nine o'clock the curate arrived, pale and scowling.

"Well, you haven't kept yourself waiting!" the alferez greeted him.

[435]"I should prefer not to be present," replied Padre Salvi in a low voice, paying no heed to the bitter tone of the alferez. "I'm very nervous."
"As no one else has come to fill the place, I judged that your presence—You know that they leave this afternoon."

"Young Ibarra and the teniente-mayor?"

The alferez pointed toward the jail. "There are eight there," he said. "Bruno died at midnight, but his statement is on record."

The curate saluted Doña Consolacion, who responded with a yawn, and took his seat in the big chair under his Majesty's portrait. "Let us begin," he announced.

"Bring out those two who are in the stocks," ordered the alferez in a tone that he tried to make as terrible as possible. Then turning to the curate he added with a change of tone, "They are fastened in by skipping two holes."

For the benefit of those who are not informed about these instruments of torture, we will say that the stocks are one of the most harmless. The holes in which the offender's legs are placed are a little more or less than a foot apart; by skipping two holes, the prisoner finds himself in a rather forced position with peculiar inconvenience to his ankles and a distance of about a yard between his lower extremities. It does not kill instantaneously, as may well be imagined.

The jailer, followed by four soldiers, pushed back the bolt and opened the door. A nauseating odor and currents of thick, damp air escaped from the darkness within at the same time that laments and sighs were heard. A soldier struck a match, but the flame was choked in such a foul atmosphere, and they had to wait until the air became fresher.

In the dim light of the candle several human forms became vaguely outlined: men hugging their knees or hiding their heads between them, some lying face downward, some standing, and some turned toward the wall. A blow [436]and a creak were heard, accompanied by curses—the stocks were opened, Doña Consolacion bent forward with the muscles of her neck swelling and her bulging eyes fixed on the half-opened door.
A wretched figure, Tarsilo, Bruno's brother, came out between two soldiers. On his wrists were handcuffs and his clothing was in shreds, revealing quite a muscular body. He turned his eyes insolently on the alferez's woman.

"This is the one who defended himself with the most courage and told his companions to run," said the alferez to Padre Salvi.

Behind him came another of miserable aspect, moaning and weeping like a child. He limped along exposing pantaloons spotted with blood. "Mercy, sir, mercy! I'll not go back into the yard," he whimpered.

“He’s a rogue,” observed the alferez to the curate. “He tried to run, but he was wounded in the thigh. These are the only two that we took alive.”

“What’s your name?” the alferez asked Tarsilo.

“Tarsilo Alasigan.”

“What did Don Crisostomo promise you for attacking the barracks?”

“Don Crisostomo never had anything to do with us.”

“Don’t deny it! That’s why you tried to surprise us.”

“You’re mistaken. You beat our father to death and we were avenging him, nothing more. Look for your two associates.”

The alferez gazed at the sergeant in surprise.

“They’re over there in the gully where we threw them yesterday and where they’ll rot. Now kill me, you’ll not learn anything more.”

General surprise and silence, broken by the alferez. “You are going to tell who your other accomplices are,” he threatened, flourishing a rattan whip.

A smile of disdain curled the prisoner’s lips. The alferez consulted with the curate in a low tone for a few moments, [437]then turned to the soldiers. “Take him out where the corpses are,” he commanded.
On a cart in a corner of the yard were heaped five corpses, partly covered with a filthy piece of torn matting. A soldier walked about near them, spitting at every moment.

“Do you know them?” asked the alferez, lifting up the matting.

Tarsilo did not answer. He saw the corpse of the madwoman’s husband with two others: that of his brother, slashed with bayonet-thrusts, and that of Lucas with the halter still around his neck. His look became somber and a sigh seemed to escape from his breast.

“Do you know them?” he was again asked, but he still remained silent.

The air hissed and the rattan cut his shoulders. He shuddered, his muscles contracted. The blows were redoubled, but he remained unmoved.

“Whip him until he bursts or talks!” cried the exasperated alferez.

“Talk now,” the directorcillo advised him. “They’ll kill you anyhow.”

They led him back into the hall where the other prisoner, with chattering teeth and quaking limbs, was calling upon the saints.

“Do you know this fellow?” asked Padre Salvi.

“This is the first time that I’ve ever seen him,” replied Tarsilo with a look of pity at the other.

The alferez struck him with his fist and kicked him. “Tie him to the bench!”

Without taking off the handcuffs, which were covered with blood, they tied him to a wooden bench. The wretched boy looked about him as if seeking something and noticed Doña Consolacion, at sight of whom he smiled sardonically. In surprise the bystanders followed his glance and saw the señora, who was lightly gnawing at her lips.

“I’ve never seen an uglier woman!” exclaimed Tarsilo in the midst of a general silence. “I’d rather lie down [438]on a bench as I do now than at her side as the alferez does.”
The Muse turned pale.

“You’re going to flog me to death, Señor Alferez,” he went on, “but tonight your woman will revenge me by embracing you.”

“Gag him!” yelled the furious alferez, trembling with wrath.

Tarsilo seemed to have desired the gag, for after it was put in place his eyes gleamed with satisfaction. At a signal from the alferez, a guard armed with a rattan whip began his gruesome task. Tarsilo’s whole body contracted, and a stifled, prolonged cry escaped from him in spite of the piece of cloth which covered his mouth. His head drooped and his clothes became stained with blood.

Padre Salvi, pallid and with wandering looks, arose laboriously, made a sign with his hand, and left the hall with faltering steps. In the street he saw a young woman leaning with her shoulders against the wall, rigid, motionless, listening attentively, staring into space, her clenched hands stretched out along the wall. The sun beat down upon her fiercely. She

seemed to be breathlessly counting those dry, dull strokes and those heartrending groans. It was Tarsilo's sister.

Meanwhile, the scene in the hall continued. The wretched boy, overcome with pain, silently waited for his executioners to become weary. At last the panting soldier let his arm fall, and the alferez, pale with anger and astonishment, made a sign for them to untie him. Doña Consolacion then arose and murmured a few words into the ear of her husband, who nodded his head in understanding.

"To the well with him!" he ordered.

The Filipinos know what this means: in Tagalog they call it *timbaín*. We do not know who invented this procedure, but we judge that it must be quite ancient. Truth at the bottom of a well may perhaps be a sarcastic interpretation.

[439]In the center of the yard rose the picturesque curb of a well, roughly fashioned from living rock. A rude apparatus of bamboo in the form of a well-sweep served for drawing up the thick, slimy, foul-smelling water. Broken pieces of pottery, manure, and other refuse were collected there, since this well was like the jail, being the place for what society rejected or found useless, and any object that fell into it, however good it might have been, was then a thing lost. Yet it was never closed up, and even at times the prisoners were condemned to go down and deepen it, not because there was any thought of getting anything useful out of such punishment, but because of the difficulties the work offered. A prisoner who once went down there would contract a fever from which he would surely die.

Tarsilo gazed upon all the preparations of the soldiers with a fixed look. He was pale, and his lips trembled or murmured a prayer. The haughtiness of his desperation seemed to have disappeared or, at least, to have weakened. Several times he bent his stiff neck and fixed his gaze on the ground as though resigned to his sufferings. They led him to the well-curb, followed by the smiling Doña Consolacion. In his misery he cast a glance of envy toward the heap of corpses and a sigh escaped from his breast.

"Talk now," the directorcillo again advised him. "They'll hang you anyhow. You'll at least die without suffering so much."

"You'll come out of this only to die," added a cuadrillero.

They took away the gag and hung him up by his feet, for he must go down head foremost and remain some time under the water, just as the bucket does, only that the man is left a longer time. While the alferez was gone to look for a watch to count the minutes, Tarsilo hung with his long hair streaming down and his eyes half closed.

"If you are Christians, if you have any heart," he begged in a low voice, "let me down quickly or make my head strike against the sides so that I'll die. God will [440]reward you for this good deed—perhaps some day you may be as I am!"
The alferez returned, watch in hand, to superintend the lowering.

"Slowly, slowly!" cried Doña Consolacion, as she kept her gaze fixed on the wretch. "Be careful!"

The well-sweep moved gently downwards. Tarsilo rubbed against the jutting stones and filthy weeds that grew in the crevices. Then the sweep stopped while the alferez counted the seconds.

"Lift him up!" he ordered, at the end of a half-minute. The silvery and harmonious tinkling of the drops of water falling back indicated the prisoner's return to the light. Now that the sweep was heavier he rose rapidly. Pieces of stone and pebbles torn from the walls fell noisily. His forehead and hair smeared with filthy slime, his face covered with cuts and bruises, his body wet and dripping, he appeared to the eyes of the silent crowd. The wind made him shiver with cold.

"Will you talk?" he was asked.

"Take care of my sister," murmured the unhappy boy as he gazed beseechingly toward one of the cuadrilleros.

The bamboo sweep again creaked, and the condemned boy once more disappeared. Doña Consolacion observed that the water remained quiet. The alferez counted a minute.

When Tarsilo again came up his features were contracted and livid. With his bloodshot eyes wide open, he looked at the bystanders.

"Are you going to talk?" the alferez again demanded in dismay.

Tarsilo shook his head, and they again lowered him. His eyelids were closing as the pupils continued to stare at the sky where the fleecy clouds floated; he doubled back his neck so that he might still see the light of day, but all too soon he had to go down into the water, and that foul curtain shut out the sight of the world from him forever.

A minute passed. The watchful Muse saw large bubbles [441]rise to the surface of the water. "He's thirsty," she commented with a laugh. The water again became still.

This time the alferez did not give the signal for a minute and a half. Tarsilo's features were now no longer contracted. The half-raised lids left the whites of his eyes showing, from his mouth poured muddy water streaked with blood, but his body did not tremble in the chill breeze.

Pale and terrified, the silent bystanders gazed at one another. The alferez made a sign that they should take the body down, and then moved away thoughtfully. Doña Consolation applied the lighted end of her cigar to the bare legs, but the flesh did not twitch and the fire was extinguished.

"He strangled himself," murmured a cuadrillero. "Look how he turned his tongue back as if trying to swallow it."

The other prisoner, who had watched this scene, sweating and trembling, now stared like a lunatic in all directions. The alferez ordered the directorcillo to question him.

"Sir, sir," he groaned, "I'll tell everything you want me to."

"Good! Let's see, what's your name?"

"Andong,[1] sir!"

"Bernardo—Leonardo—Ricardo—Eduardo—Gerardo—or what?"

"Andong, sir!" repeated the imbecile.

"Put it down Bernardo, or whatever it may be," dictated the alferez.

"Surname?"

The man gazed at him in terror.

"What name have you that is added to the name Andong?"

“Ah, sir! Andong the Witless, sir!”

The bystander’s could not restrain a smile. Even the alferez paused in his pacing about.

[442]“Occupation?”
“Pruner of coconut trees, sir, and servant of my mother-in-law.”

“Who ordered you to attack the barracks?”

“No one, sir!”

“What, no one? Don’t lie about it or into the well you go! Who ordered you? Say truly!”

“Truly, sir!”

“Who?”

“Who, sir!”

“I’m asking you who ordered you to start the revolution?”

“What revolution, sir?”

“This one, for you were in the yard by the barracks last night.”

“Ah, sir!” exclaimed Andong, blushing.

“Who’s guilty of that?”

“My mother-in-law, sir!”

Surprise and laughter followed these words. The alferez stopped and stared not unkindly at the wretch, who, thinking that his words had produced a good effect, went on with more spirit: “Yes, sir, my mother-in-law doesn’t give me anything to eat but what is rotten and unfit, so last night when I came by here with my belly aching I saw the yard of the barracks near and I said to myself, ‘It’s night-time, no one will see me.’ I went in—and then many shots sounded—”

A blow from the rattan cut his speech short.

“To the jail,” ordered the alferez. “This afternoon, to the capital!”[443]

[1]A common nickname. See the Glossary, under *Nicknames.—TR*.

[Contents]

Chapter LVIII
The Accursed

Soon the news spread through the town that the prisoners were about to set out. At first it was heard with terror; afterward came the weeping and wailing. The families of the prisoners ran about in distraction, going from the convento to the barracks, from the barracks to the town hall, and finding no consolation anywhere, filled the air with cries and groans. The curate had shut himself up on a plea of illness; the alferez had increased the guards, who received the supplicating women with the butts of their rifles; the gobernadorcillo, at best a useless creature, seemed to be more foolish and more useless than ever. In front of the jail the women who still had strength enough ran to and fro, while those who had not sat down on the ground and called upon the names of their beloved.

Although the sun beat down fiercely, not one of these unfortunates thought of going away. Doray, the erstwhile merry and happy wife of Don Filipo, wandered about dejectedly, carrying in her arms their infant son, both weeping. To the advice of friends that she go back home to avoid exposing her baby to an attack of fever, the disconsolate woman replied, "Why should he live, if he isn't going to have a father to rear him?"

"Your husband is innocent. Perhaps he'll come back."

"Yes, after we're all dead!"

Capitana Tinay wept and called upon her son Antonio. The courageous Capitana Maria gazed silently toward the small grating behind which were her twin-boys, her only sons.

There was present also the mother-in-law of the pruner [444]of coco-palms, but she was not weeping; instead, she paced back and forth, gesticulating with uplifted arms, and haranguing the crowd: "Did you ever see anything like it? To arrest my Andong, to shoot at him, to put him in the stocks, to take him to the capital, and only because—because he had a new pair of pantaloons! This calls for vengeance! The civil-guards are committing abuses! I swear that if I ever again catch one of them in my garden, as has often happened, I'll chop him up, I'll chop him up, or else—let him try to

chop me up!" Few persons, however, joined in the protests of the Mussulmanish mother-in-law.
"Don Crisostomo is to blame for all this," sighed a woman.

The schoolmaster was also in the crowd, wandering about bewildered. Ñor Juan did not rub his hands, nor was he carrying his rule and plumb-bob; he was dressed in black, for he had heard the bad news and, true to his habit of looking upon the future as already assured, was in mourning for Ibarra's death.

At two o'clock in the afternoon an open cart drawn by two oxen stopped in front of the town hall. This was at once set upon by the people, who attempted to unhitch the oxen and destroy it. "Don't do that!" said Capitana Maria. "Do you want to make them walk?" This consideration acted as a restraint on the prisoners' relatives.

Twenty soldiers came out and surrounded the cart; then the prisoners appeared. The first was Don Filipo, bound. He greeted his wife smilingly, but Doray broke out into bitter weeping and two guards had difficulty in preventing her from embracing her husband. Antonio, the son of Capitana Tinay, appeared crying like a baby, which only added to the lamentations of his family. The witless Andong broke out into tears at sight of his mother-in-law, the cause of his misfortune. Albino, the quondam theological student, was also bound, as were Capitana Maria's twins. All three were grave and serious. The last to come [445]out was Ibarra, unbound, but conducted between two guards. The pallid youth looked about him for a friendly face.
"He's the one that's to blame!" cried many voices. "He's to blame and he goes loose!"

"My son-in-law hasn't done anything and he's got handcuffs on!" Ibarra turned to the guards. "Bind me, and bind me well, elbow to elbow," he said.

"We haven't any order."

"Bind me!" And the soldiers obeyed.

The alferez appeared on horseback, armed to the teeth, ten or fifteen more soldiers following him.

Each prisoner had his family there to pray for him, to weep for him, to bestow on him the most endearing names—all save Ibarra, who had no one, even Ñor Juan and the schoolmaster having disappeared.

“Look what you’ve done to my husband and my son!” Doray cried to him. “Look at my poor son! You’ve robbed him of his father!”

So the sorrow of the families was converted into anger toward the young man, who was accused of having started the trouble. The alferez gave the order to set out.

“You’re a coward!” the mother-in-law of Andong cried after Ibarra. “While others were fighting for you, you hid yourself, coward!”

“May you be accursed!” exclaimed an old man, running along beside him. “Accursed be the gold amassed by your family to disturb our peace! Accursed! Accursed!”

“May they hang you, heretic!” cried a relative of Albino’s. Unable to restrain himself, he caught up a stone and threw it at the youth.

This example was quickly followed, and a rain of dirt and stones fell on the wretched young man. Without anger or complaint, impassively he bore the righteous vengeance of so many suffering hearts. This was the parting, the farewell, offered to him by the people among whom were all his affections. With bowed head, he was perhaps thinking [446]of a man whipped through the streets of Manila, of an old woman falling dead at the sight of her son’s head; perhaps Elias’s history was passing before his eyes.

The alferez found it necessary to drive the crowd back, but the stone-throwing and the insults did not cease. One mother alone did not wreak vengeance on him for her sorrows, Capitana Maria. Motionless, with lips contracted and eyes full of silent tears, she saw her two sons move away; her firmness, her dumb grief surpassed that of the fabled Niobe.

So the procession moved on. Of the persons who appeared at the few open windows those who showed most pity for the youth were the indifferent and the curious. All his friends had hidden themselves, even Capitan Basilio himself, who forbade his daughter Sinang to weep.

Ibarra saw the smoking ruins of his house—the home of his fathers, where he was born, where clustered the fondest recollections of his childhood and his youth. Tears long repressed started into his eyes, and he bowed his head and wept without having the consolation of being able to hide his grief, tied as he was, nor of having any one in whom his sorrow awoke compassion. Now he had neither country, nor home, nor love, nor friends, nor future!

From a slight elevation a man gazed upon the sad procession. He was an old man, pale and emaciated, wrapped in a woolen blanket, supporting himself with difficulty on a staff. It was the old Sage, Tasio, who, on hearing of the event, had left his bed to be present, but his strength had not been sufficient to carry him to the town hall. The old man followed the cart with his gaze until it disappeared in the distance and then remained for some time afterward with his head bowed, deep in thought. Then he stood up and laboriously made his way toward his house, pausing to rest at every step. On the following day some herdsmen found him dead on the very threshold of his solitary home.[447]

[Contents]

Chapter LIX
Patriotism and Private Interests

Secretly the telegraph transmitted the report to Manila, and thirty-six hours later the newspapers commented on it with great mystery and not a few dark hints—augmented, corrected, or mutilated by the censor. In the meantime, private reports, emanating from the convents, were the first to gain secret currency from mouth to mouth, to the great terror of those who heard them. The fact, distorted in a thousand ways, was believed with greater or less ease according to whether it was flattering or worked contrary to the passions and ways of thinking of each hearer.

Without public tranquillity seeming disturbed, at least outwardly, yet the peace of mind of each home was whirled about like the water in a pond: while the surface appears smooth and clear, in the depths the silent fishes swarm, dive about, and chase one another. For one part of the population crosses, decorations, epaulets, offices, prestige, power, importance, dignities began to whirl about like butterflies in a golden atmosphere. For the other part a dark cloud arose on the horizon, projecting from its gray depths, like black silhouettes, bars, chains, and even the fateful gibbet. In the air there seemed to be heard investigations, condemnations, and the cries from the torture chamber; Marianas[1] and Bagumbayan presented themselves wrapped in a torn and bloody veil, fishers and fished confused. Fate pictured the event to the imaginations of the Manilans like certain Chinese fans—one side painted [448]black, the other gilded with bright-colored birds and flowers.

In the convents the greatest excitement prevailed. Carriages were harnessed, the Provincials exchanged visits and held secret conferences; they presented themselves in the palaces to offer their aid to *the government in its perilous crisis*. Again there was talk of comets and omens.

"*A Te Deum! A Te Deum!*" cried a friar in one convent. "This time let no one be absent from the chorus! It's no small mercy from God to make it clear just now, especially in these hopeless times, how much we are worth!"

"The little general *Mal-Aguero*[2] can gnaw his lips over this lesson," responded another.

“What would have become of him if not for the religious corporations?”

“And to celebrate the fiesta better, serve notice on the cook and the refectioner. *Gaudeamus* for three days!”

“Amen!” “Viva Salvi!” “Amen!”

In another convent they talked differently.

“You see, now, that fellow is a pupil of the Jesuits. The filibusters come from the Ateneo.”

“And the anti-friars.”

“I told you so. The Jesuits are ruining the country, they’re corrupting the youth, but they are tolerated because they trace a few scrawls on a piece of paper when there is an earthquake.”

“And God knows how they are made!”

“Yes, but don’t contradict them. When everything is shaking and moving about, who draws diagrams? Nothing, Padre Secchi—”[3]

[449]And they smiled with sovereign disdain.
“But what about the weather forecasts and the typhoons?” asked another ironically. “Aren’t they divine?”

“Any fisherman foretells them!”

“When he who governs is a fool—tell me how your head is and I’ll tell you how your foot is! But you’ll see if the friends favor one another. The newspapers very nearly ask a miter for Padre Salvi.”

“He’s going to get it! He’ll lick it right up!”

“Do you think so?”

“Why not! Nowadays they grant one for anything whatsoever. I know of a fellow who got one for less. He wrote a cheap little work demonstrating that the Indians are not capable of being anything but mechanics. Pshaw, old-fogyisms!”

“That’s right! So much favoritism injures Religion!” exclaimed another. “If the miters only had eyes and could see what heads they were upon—”

“If the miters were natural objects,” added another in a nasal tone, “*Natura abhorrer vacuum*.”

“That’s why they grab for them, their emptiness attracts!” responded another.

These and many more things were said in the convents, but we will spare our reader other comments of a political, metaphysical, or piquant nature and conduct him to a private house. As we have few acquaintances in Manila, let us enter the home of Capitan Tinong, the polite individual whom we saw so profusely inviting Ibarra to honor him with a visit.

In the rich and spacious sala of his Tondo house, Capitan Tinong was seated in a wide armchair, rubbing his hands in a gesture of despair over his face and the nape of his neck, while his wife, Capitana Tinchang, was weeping and preaching to him. From the corner their two daughters listened silently and stupidly, yet greatly affected.

“Ay, Virgin of Antipolo!” cried the woman. “Ay, [450]Virgin of the Rosary and of the Girdle![4] Ay, ay! Our Lady of Novaliches!”
“Mother!” responded the elder of the daughters.

“I told you so!” continued the wife in an accusing tone. “I told you so! Ay, Virgin of Carmen,[5] ay!”

“But you didn’t tell me anything,” Capitan Tinong dared to answer tearfully. “On the contrary, you told me that I was doing well to frequent Capitan Tiago’s house and cultivate friendship with him, because he’s rich —and you told me—”

“What! What did I tell you? I didn’t tell you that, I didn’t tell you anything! Ay, if you had only listened to me!”

“Now you’re throwing the blame on *me*,” he replied bitterly, slapping the arm of his chair. “Didn’t you tell me that I had done well to invite him to dine with us, because he was wealthy? Didn’t you say that we ought to have friends only among the wealthy? *Abá!*”

“It’s true that I told you so, because—because there wasn’t anything else for me to do. You did nothing but sing his praises: *Don Ibarra* here, *Don Ibarra* there, *Don Ibarra* everywhere. *Abaá!* But I didn’t advise you to hunt him up and talk to him at that reception! You can’t deny that!”

“Did I know that he was to be there, perhaps?”

“But you ought to have known it!”

“How so, if I didn’t even know him?”

[451]“But you ought to have known him!”
“But, Tinchang, it was the first time that I ever saw him, that I ever heard him spoken of!”

“Well then, you ought to have known him before and heard him spoken of. That’s what you’re a man for and wear trousers and read*El Diario de Manila*,”6 answered his unterrified spouse, casting on him a terrible look.

To this Capitan Tinong did not know what to reply. Capitana Tinchang, however, was not satisfied with this victory, but wished to silence him completely. So she approached him with clenched fists. “Is this what I’ve worked for, year after year, toiling and saving, that you by your stupidity may throw away the fruits of my labor?” she scolded. “Now they’ll come to deport you, they’ll take away all our property, just as they did from the wife of—Oh, if I were a man, if I were a man!”

Seeing that her husband bowed his head, she again fell to sobbing, but still repeating, “Ay, if I were a man, if I were a man!”

“Well, if you were a man,” the provoked husband at length asked, “what would you do?”

“What would I do? Well—well—well, this very minute I’d go to the Captain-General and offer to fight against the rebels, this very minute!”

“But haven’t you seen what the *Diario* says? Read it: ‘The vile and infamous treason has been suppressed with energy, strength, and vigor, and soon the rebellious enemies of the Fatherland and their accomplices will feel all the weight and severity of the law.’ Don’t you see it? There isn’t any more rebellion.”

“That doesn’t matter! You ought to offer yourself as they did in ’72;[7] they saved themselves.”

[452]“Yes, that’s what was done by Padre Burg—”
But he was unable to finish this name, for his wife ran to him and slapped her hand over his mouth. “Shut up! Are you saying that name so that they may garrote you tomorrow on Bagumbayan? Don’t you know that to pronounce it is enough to get yourself condemned without trial? Keep quiet!”

However Capitan Tinong may have felt about obeying her, he could hardly have done otherwise, for she had his mouth covered with both her hands, pressing his little head against the back of the chair, so that the poor fellow might have been smothered to death had not a new personage appeared on the scene. This was their cousin, Don Primitivo, who had memorized the “Amat,” a man of some forty years, plump, big-paunched, and elegantly dressed.

“*Quid video?*” he exclaimed as he entered. “What’s happening? *Quare?*”[8]

“Ay, cousin!” cried the woman, running toward him in tears, “I’ve sent for you because I don’t know what’s going to become of us. What do you advise? Speak, you’ve studied Latin and know how to argue.”

“But first, *quid quaeritis? Nihil est in intellectu quod prius non fuerit in sensu; nihil volitum quin praecognitum*.”[9]

He sat down gravely and, just as if the Latin phrases had possessed a soothing virtue, the couple ceased weeping and drew nearer to him to hang upon the advice from his lips, as at one time the Greeks did before the words of salvation from the oracle that was to free them from the Persian invaders.

“Why do you weep? *Ubinam gentium sumus?*”[10]

[453]“You’ve already heard of the uprising?”
“*Alzamentum Ibarrae ab alferesio Guardiae Civilis destructum? Et nunc?*[11] What! Does Don Crisostomo owe you anything?”

“No, but you know, Tinong invited him to dinner and spoke to him on the Bridge of Spain—in broad daylight! They’ll say that he’s a friend of his!”

"A friend of his!" exclaimed the startled Latinist, rising. "*Amice, amicus Plato sed magis amica veritas*. Birds of a feather flock together. *Malum est negotium et est timendum rerum istarum horrendissimum resultatum!*[12] Ahem!"

Capitan Tinong turned deathly pale at hearing so many words in *um*; such a sound presaged ill. His wife clasped her hands supplicatingly and said:

"Cousin, don't talk to us in Latin now. You know that we're not philosophers like you. Let's talk in Spanish or Tagalog. Give us some advice."

"It's a pity that you don't understand Latin, cousin. Truths in Latin are lies in Tagalog; for example, *contra principia negantem fustibus est arguendum*[13] in Latin is a truth like Noah's ark, but I put it into practise once and I was the one who got whipped. So, it's a pity that you don't know Latin. In Latin everything would be straightened out."

"We, too, know many *oremus, parcenobis*, and *Agnus Dei Catolis*,[14] but now we shouldn't understand one another. Provide Tinong with an argument so that they won't hang him!"

"You're done wrong, very wrong, cousin, in cultivating friendship with that young man," replied the Latinist.

[454]"The righteous suffer for the sinners. I was almost going to advise you to make your will. *Vae illis! Ubi est fumus ibi est ignis! Similis simili audet; atqui Ibarra ahorcatur, ergo ahorcaberis*—"[15] With this he shook his head from side to side disgustedly.
"Saturnino, what's the matter?" cried Capitana Tinchang in dismay. "Ay, he's dead! A doctor! Tinong, Tinongoy!"

The two daughters ran to her, and all three fell to weeping. "It's nothing more than a swoon, cousin! I would have been more pleased that—that—but unfortunately it's only a swoon. *Non timeo mortem in catre sed super espaldonem Bagumbayanis*.[16] Get some water!"

"Don't die!" sobbed the wife. "Don't die, for they'll come and arrest you! Ay, if you die and the soldiers come, ay, ay!"

The learned cousin rubbed the victim's face with water until he recovered consciousness. "Come, don't cry. *Inveni remedium*: I've found a remedy. Let's carry him to bed. Come, take courage! Here I am with you—and all the wisdom of the ancients. Call a doctor, and you, cousin, go right away to the Captain-General and take him a present—a gold ring, a chain. *Dadivae quebrantant peñas*.[17]Say that it's a Christmas gift. Close the windows, the doors, and if any one asks for my cousin, say that he is seriously ill. Meanwhile, I'll burn all his letters, papers, and books, so that they can't find anything, just as Don Crisostomo did. *Scripti testes sunt! Quod medicamenta non sanant, ferrum sanat, quod ferrum non sanat, ignis sanat.*"[18]

"Yes, do so, cousin, burn everything!" said Capitana [455]Tinchang. "Here are the keys, here are the letters from Capitan Tiago. Burn them! Don't leave a single European newspaper, for they're very dangerous. Here are the copies of *The Times* that I've kept for wrapping up soap and old clothes. Here are the books."

"Go to the Captain-General, cousin," said Don Primitivo, "and leave us alone. *In extremis extrema*.[19] Give me the authority of a Roman dictator, and you'll see how soon I'll save the coun—I mean, my cousin."

He began to give orders and more orders, to upset bookcases, to tear up papers, books, and letters. Soon a big fire was burning in the kitchen. Old shotguns were smashed with axes, rusty revolvers were thrown away. The maidservant who wanted to keep the barrel of one for a blowpipe received a reprimand:

"*Conservare etiam sperasti, perfida?*[20] Into the fire!" So he continued his auto da fé. Seeing an old volume in vellum, he read the title, *Revolutions of the Celestial Globes*, by Copernicus. Whew! "*Ite, maledicti, in ignem kalanis!*"[21] he exclaimed, hurling it into the flames. "Revolutions and Copernicus! Crimes on crimes! If I hadn't come in time! *Liberty in the Philippines!* Ta, ta, ta! What books! Into the fire!"

Harmless books, written by simple authors, were burned; not even the most innocent work escaped. Cousin Primitivo was right: the righteous suffer for the sinners.

Four or five hours later, at a pretentious reception in the Walled City, current events were being commented upon. There were present a lot of old women and maidens of marriageable age, the wives and daughters of government employees, dressed in loose gowns, fanning themselves and yawning. Among the men, who, like the women, showed in their faces their education and origin, was an elderly gentleman, small and one-armed, whom the others treated [456]with great respect. He himself maintained a disdainful silence.

"To tell the truth, formerly I couldn't endure the friars and the civil-guards, they're so rude," said a corpulent dame, "but now that I see their usefulness and their services, I would almost marry any one of them gladly. I'm a patriot."

"That's what I say!" added a thin lady. "What a pity that we haven't our former governor. He would leave the country as clean as a platter."

"And the whole race of filibusters would be exterminated!"

"Don't they say that there are still a lot of islands to be populated? Why don't they deport all these crazy Indians to them? If I were the Captain-General—"

"Señoras," interrupted the one-armed individual, "the Captain-General knows his duty. As I've heard, he's very much irritated, for he had heaped favors on that Ibarra."

"Heaped favors on him!" echoed the thin lady, fanning herself furiously. "Look how ungrateful these Indians are! Is it possible to treat them as if they were human beings? *Jesús!*"

"Do you know what I've heard?" asked a military official.

"What's that?"

"Let's hear it!"

"What do they say?"

"Reputable persons," replied the officer in the midst of a profound silence, "state that this agitation for building a schoolhouse was a pure fairy tale."

"*Jesús!* Just see that!" the señoras exclaimed, already believing in the trick.

“The school was a pretext. What he wanted to build was a fort from which he could safely defend himself when we should come to attack him.”

“What infamy! Only an Indian is capable of such cowardly thoughts,” exclaimed the fat lady. “If I were the [457]Captain-General they would soon seem they would soon see—”
“That’s what I say!” exclaimed the thin lady, turning to the one-armed man. “Arrest all the little lawyers, priestlings, merchants, and without trial banish or deport them! Tear out the evil by the roots!”

“But it’s said that this filibuster is the descendant of Spaniards,” observed the one-armed man, without looking at any one in particular.

“Oh, yes!” exclaimed the fat lady, unterrified. “It’s always the creoles! No Indian knows anything about revolution! Rear crows, rear crows!”[22]

“Do you know what I’ve heard?” asked a creole lady, to change the topic of conversation. “The wife of Capitan Tinong, you remember her, the woman in whose house we danced and dined during the fiesta of Tondo—”

“The one who has two daughters? What about her?”

“Well, that woman just this afternoon presented the Captain-General with a ring worth a thousand pesos!”

The one-armed man turned around. “Is that so? Why?” he asked with shining eyes.

“She said that it was a Christmas gift—”

“But Christmas doesn’t come for a month yet!”

“Perhaps she’s afraid the storm is blowing her way,” observed the fat lady.

“And is getting under cover,” added the thin señora.

“When no return is asked, it’s a confession of guilt.”

“This must be carefully looked into,” declared the one-armed man thoughtfully. “I fear that there’s a cat in the bag.”

“A cat in the bag, yes! That’s just what I was going to say,” echoed the thin lady.

“And so was I,” said the other, taking the words out of her mouth, “the wife of Capitan Tinong is so stingy—she hasn’t yet sent us any present and that after we’ve been [458]in her house. So, when such a grasping and covetous woman lets go of a little present worth a thousand pesos—”
“But, is it a fact?” inquired the one-armed man.

“Certainly! Most certainly! My cousin’s sweetheart, his Excellency’s adjutant, told her so. And I’m of the opinion that it’s the very same ring that the older daughter wore on the day of the fiesta. She’s always covered with diamonds.”

“A walking show-case!”

“A way of attracting attention, like any other! Instead of buying a fashion plate or paying a dressmaker—”

Giving some pretext, the one-armed man left the gathering. Two hours later, when the world slept, various residents of Tondo received an invitation through some soldiers. The authorities could not consent to having certain persons of position and property sleep in such poorly guarded and badly ventilated houses—in Fort Santiago and other government buildings their sleep would be calmer and more refreshing. Among these favored persons was included the unfortunate Capitan Tinong.[459]

1The Marianas, or Ladrone Islands, were used as a place of banishment for political prisoners.—TR.

2“Evil Omen,” a nickname applied by the friars to General Joaquin Jovellar, who was governor of the Islands from 1883 to 1885. It fell to the lot of General Jovellar, a kindly old man, much more soldier than administrator, to attempt the introduction of certain salutary reforms tending toward progress, hence his disfavor with the holy fathers. The mention of “General J———” in the last part of the epilogue probably refers also to him.—TR.

3A celebrated Italian astronomer, member of the Jesuit Order. The Jesuits are still in charge of the Observatory of Manila.—TR.

4“Our Lady of the Girdle” is the patroness of the Augustinian Order.—TR.

5This image is in the six-million-peso steel church of St. Sebastian in Manila. Something of her early history is thus given by Fray Luis de Jesus in his *Historia* of the Recollect Order (1681): “A very holy image is revered there under the title of Carmen. Although that image is small in stature, it is a great and perennial spring of prodigies for those who invoke her. Our religious took it from Nueva España (Mexico), and even in that very navigation she was able to make herself known by her miracles .... That most holy image is daily frequented with vows, presents, and novenas, thank-offerings of the many who are daily favored by that queen of the skies.”—Blair and Robertson, *The Philippine Islands*, Vol. XXI, p. 195.

6The oldest and most conservative newspaper in Manila at the time this work was written.—TR.

7Following closely upon the liberal administration of La Torre, there occurred in the Cavite arsenal in 1872 a mutiny which was construed as an incipient rebellion, and for alleged complicity in it three [451n]native priests, Padres Burgos, Gomez, and Zamora, were garroted, while a number of prominent Manilans were deported.—TR.

8What do I see? ... Wherefore?

9What do you wish? Nothing is in the intellect which has not first passed through the senses; nothing is willed that is not already in the mind.

10Where in the world are we?

11The uprising of Ibarra suppressed by the alferez of the Civil Guard? And now?

12Friend, Plato is dear but truth is dearer ... It's a bad business and a horrible result from these things is to be feared.

13Against him who denies the fundamentals, clubs should be used as arguments.

14Latin prayers. "Agnus Dei Catolis" for "Agnus Dei qui tollis" (John I. 29).

15Woe unto them! Where there's smoke there's fire! Like seeks like; and if Ibarra is hanged, therefore you will be hanged.

16I do not fear death in bed, but upon the mount of Bagumbayan.

17The first part of a Spanish proverb: "Gifts break rocks, and enter without gimlets."

18What is written is evidence! What medicines do not cure, iron cures; what iron does not cure, fire cures.

19In extreme cases, extreme measures.

20Do you wish to keep it also, traitress?

21Go, accursed, into the fire of the kalan.

22The first part of a Spanish proverb: "Cría cuervos y te sacarán los ojos," "Rear crows and they will pick your eyes out."—TR.

[Contents]

Chapter LX
Maria Clara Weds

Capitan Tiago was very happy, for in all this terrible storm no one had taken any notice of him. He had not been arrested, nor had he been subjected to solitary confinement, investigations, electric machines, continuous foot-baths in underground cells, or other pleasantries that are well-known to certain folk who call themselves civilized. His friends, that is, those who had been his friends—for the good man had denied all his Filipino friends from the instant when they were suspected by the government—had also returned to their homes after a few days' vacation in the state edifices. The Captain-General himself had ordered that they be cast out from his precincts, not considering them worthy of remaining therein, to the great disgust of the one-armed individual, who had hoped to celebrate the approaching Christmas in their abundant and opulent company.

Capitan Tinong had returned to his home sick, pale, and swollen; the excursion had not done him good. He was so changed that he said not a word, nor even greeted his family, who wept, laughed, chattered, and almost went mad with joy. The poor man no longer ventured out of his house for fear of running the risk of saying good-day to a filibuster. Not even Don Primitivo himself, with all the wisdom of the ancients, could draw him out of his silence.

"*Crede, prime*," the Latinist told him, "if I hadn't got here to burn all your papers, they would have squeezed your neck; and if I had burned the whole house they wouldn't have touched a hair of your head. But *quod* [460]*eventum, eventum; gratias agamus Domino Deo quia non in Marianis Insulis es, camotes seminando*."[1]

Stories similar to Capitan Tinong's were not unknown to Capitan Tiago, so he bubbled over with gratitude, without knowing exactly to whom he owed such signal favors. Aunt Isabel attributed the miracle to the Virgin of Antipolo, to the Virgin of the Rosary, or at least to the Virgin of Carmen, and at the very, very least that she was willing to concede, to Our Lady of the Girdle; according to her the miracle could not get beyond that.

Capitan Tiago did not deny the miracle, but added: "I think so, Isabel, but the Virgin of Antipolo couldn't have done it alone. My friends have helped,

my future son-in-law, Señor Linares, who, as you know, joked with Señor Antonio Canovas himself, the premier whose portrait appears in the *Ilustración*, he who doesn't condescend to show more than half his face to the people."

So the good man could not repress a smile of satisfaction every time that he heard any important news. And there was plenty of news: it was whispered about in secret that Ibarra would be hanged; that, while many proofs of his guilt had been lacking, at last some one had appeared to sustain the accusation; that experts had declared that in fact the work on the schoolhouse could pass for a bulwark of fortification, although somewhat defective, as was only to be expected of ignorant Indians. These rumors calmed him and made him smile.

In the same way that Capitan Tiago and his cousin diverged in their opinions, the friends of the family were also divided into two parties,—one miraculous, the other governmental, although this latter was insignificant. The miraculous party was again subdivided: the senior sacristan of Binondo, the candle-woman, and the leader of the Brotherhood [461]saw the hand of God directed by the Virgin of the Rosary; while the Chinese wax-chandler, his caterer on his visits to Antipolo, said, as he fanned himself and shook his leg:
"Don't fool yourself—it's the Virgin of Antipolo! She can do more than all the rest—don't fool yourself!"[2]

Capitan Tiago had great respect for this Chinese, who passed himself off as a prophet and a physician. Examining the palm of the deceased lady just before her daughter was born, he had prognosticated: "If it's not a boy and doesn't die, it'll be a fine girl!"[3] and Maria Clara had come into the world to fulfill the infidel's prophecy.

Capitan Tiago, then, as a prudent and cautious man, could not decide so easily as Trojan Paris—he could not so lightly give the preference to one Virgin for fear of offending another, a situation that might be fraught with grave consequences. "Prudence!" he said to himself. "Let's not go and spoil it all now."

He was still in the midst of these doubts when the governmental party arrived,—Doña Victorina, Don Tiburcio, and Linares. Doña Victorina did

the talking for the three men as well as for herself. She mentioned Linares' visits to the Captain-General and repeatedly insinuated the advantages of a relative of "quality." "Now," she concluded, "as we was zaying: he who zhelterz himzelf well, builds a good roof."

"T-the other w-way, w-woman!" corrected the doctor.

For some days now she had been endeavoring to *Andalusize* her speech, and no one had been able to get this idea out of her head—she would sooner have first let them tear off her false frizzes.

"Yez," she went on, speaking of Ibarra, "he deserves [462]it all. I told you zo when I first zaw him, he's a filibuzter. What did the General zay to you, cousin? What did he zay? What news did he tell you about thiz Ibarra?" Seeing that her cousin was slow in answering, she continued, directing her remarks to Capitan Tiago, "Believe me, if they zentenz him to death, as is to be hoped, it'll be on account of my cousin."

"Señora, señora!" protested Linares.

But she gave him no time for objections. "How diplomatic you have become! We know that you're the adviser of the General, that he couldn't live without you. Ah, Clarita, what a pleasure to zee you!"

Maria Clara was still pale, although now quite recovered from her illness. Her long hair was tied up with a light blue silk ribbon. With a timid bow and a sad smile she went up to Doña Victorina for the ceremonial kiss.

After the usual conventional remarks, the pseudo-Andalusian continued: "We've come to visit you. You've been zaved, thankz to your relations." This was said with a significant glance toward Linares.

"God has protected my father," replied the girl in a low voice.

"Yez, Clarita, but the time of the miracles is pazt. We Zpaniards zay: 'Truzt in the Virgin and take to your heels.'"

"T-the other w-way!"

Capitan Tiago, who had up to this point had no chance to speak, now made bold enough to ask, while he threw himself into an attitude of strict attention, "So you, Doña Victorina, think that the Virgin—"

“We’ve come ezpezially to talk with you about the virgin,” she answered mysteriously, making a sign toward Maria Clara. “We’ve come to talk business.”

The maiden understood that she was expected to retire, so with an excuse she went away, supporting herself on the furniture.

[463]What was said and what was agreed upon in this conference was so sordid and mean that we prefer not to recount it. It is enough to record that as they took their leave they were all merry, and that afterwards Capitan Tiago said to Aunt Isabel:
“Notify the restaurant that we’ll have a fiesta tomorrow. Get Maria ready, for we’re going to marry her off before long.”

Aunt Isabel stared at him in consternation.

“You’ll see! When Señor Linares is our son-in-law we’ll get into all the palaces. Every one will envy us, every one will die of envy!”

Thus it happened that at eight o’clock on the following evening the house of Capitan Tiago was once again filled, but this time his guests were only Spaniards and Chinese. The fair sex was represented by Peninsular and Philippine-Spanish ladies.

There were present the greater part of our acquaintances: Padre Sibyla and Padre Salvi among various Franciscans and Dominicans; the old lieutenant of the Civil Guard, Señor Guevara, gloomier than ever; the alferez, who was for the thousandth time describing his battle and gazing over his shoulders at every one, believing himself to be a Don John of Austria, for he was now a major; De Espadaña, who looked at the alferez with respect and fear, and avoided his gaze; and Doña Victorina, swelling with indignation. Linares had not yet come; as a personage of importance, he had to arrive later than the others. There are creatures so simple that by being an hour behind time they transform themselves into great men.

In the group of women Maria Clara was the subject of a murmured conversation. The maiden had welcomed them all ceremoniously, without losing her air of sadness.

“Pish!” remarked one young woman. “The proud little thing!”

“Pretty little thing!” responded another. “But he [464]might have picked out some other girl with a less foolish face.”
“The gold, child! The good youth is selling himself.”

In another part the comments ran thus:

“To get married when her first fiancé is about to be hanged!”

“That’s what’s called prudence, having a substitute ready.”

“Well, when she gets to be a widow—”

Maria Clara was seated in a chair arranging a salver of flowers and doubtless heard all these remarks, for her hand trembled, she turned pale, and several times bit her lips.

In the circle of men the conversation was carried on in loud tones and, naturally, turned upon recent events. All were talking, even Don Tiburcio, with the exception of Padre Sibyla, who maintained his usual disdainful silence.

“I’ve heard it said that your Reverence is leaving the town, Padre Salvi?” inquired the new major, whose fresh star had made him more amiable.

“I have nothing more to do there. I’m going to stay permanently in Manila. And you?”

“I’m also leaving the town,” answered the ex-alferez, swelling up. “The government needs me to command a flying column to clean the provinces of filibusters.”

Fray Sibyla looked him over rapidly from head to foot and then turned his back completely.

“Is it known for certain what will become of the ringleader, the filibuster?” inquired a government employee.

“Do you mean Crisostomo Ibarra?” asked another. “The most likely and most just thing is that he will be hanged, like those of ’72.”

“He’s going to be deported,” remarked the old lieutenant, dryly.

“Deported! Nothing more than deported? But it will be a perpetual deportation!” exclaimed several voices at the same time.

[465]“If that young man,” continued the lieutenant, Guevara, in a loud and severe tone, “had been more cautious, if he had confided less in certain persons with whom he corresponded, if our prosecutors did not know how to interpret so subtly what is written, that young man would surely have been acquitted.”
This declaration on the part of the old lieutenant and the tone of his voice produced great surprise among his hearers, who were apparently at a loss to know what to say. Padre Salvi stared in another direction, perhaps to avoid the gloomy look that the old soldier turned on him. Maria Clara let her flowers fall and remained motionless. Padre Sibyla, who knew so well how to be silent, seemed also to be the only one who knew how to ask a question.

“You’re speaking of letters, Señor Guevara?”

“I’m speaking of what was told me by his lawyer, who looked after the case with interest and zeal. Outside of some ambiguous lines which this youth wrote to a woman before he left for Europe, lines in which the government’s attorney saw a plot and a threat against the government, and which he acknowledged to be his, there wasn’t anything found to accuse him of.”

“But the declaration of the outlaw before he died?”

“His lawyer had that thrown out because, according to the outlaw himself, they had never communicated with the young man, but with a certain Lucas, who was an enemy of his, as could be proved, and who committed suicide, perhaps from remorse. It was proved that the papers found on the corpse were forged, since the handwriting was like that of Señor Ibarra’s seven years ago, but not like his now, which leads to the belief that the model for them may have been that incriminating letter. Besides, the lawyer says that if Señor Ibarra had refused to acknowledge the letter, he might have been able to do a great deal for him—but at sight of the letter he turned pale, lost his courage, and confirmed everything written in it.”

[466]“Did you say that the letter was directed to a woman?” asked a Franciscan. “How did it get into the hands of the prosecutor?”

The lieutenant did not answer. He stared for a moment at Padre Salvi and then moved away, nervously twisting the sharp point of his gray beard. The others made their comments.

"There is seen the hand of God!" remarked one. "Even the women hate him."

"He had his house burned down, thinking in that way to save himself, but he didn't count on the guest, on his *querida*, his *babaye*," added another, laughing. "It's the work of God! *Santiago y cierra España!*"[4]

Meanwhile the old soldier paused in his pacing about and approached Maria Clara, who was listening to the conversation, motionless in her chair, with the flowers scattered at her feet.

"You are a very prudent girl," the old officer whispered to her. "You did well to give up the letter. You have thus assured yourself an untroubled future."

With startled eyes she watched him move away from her, and bit her lip. Fortunately, Aunt Isabel came along, and she had sufficient strength left to catch hold of the old lady's skirt.

"Aunt!" she murmured.

"What's the matter?" asked the old lady, frightened by the look on the girl's face.

"Take me to my room!" she pleaded, grasping her aunt's arm in order to rise.

"Are you sick, daughter? You look as if you'd lost your bones! What's the matter?"

"A fainting spell—the people in the room—so many lights—I need to rest. Tell father that I'm going to sleep."

"You're cold. Do you want some tea?"

Maria Clara shook her head, entered and locked the [467]door of her chamber, and then, her strength failing her, she fell sobbing to the floor at the feet of an image.

“Mother, mother, mother mine!” she sobbed.

Through the window and a door that opened on the azotea the moonlight entered. The musicians continued to play merry waltzes, laughter and the hum of voices penetrated into the chamber, several times her father, Aunt Isabel, Doña Victorina, and even Linares knocked at the door, but Maria did not move. Heavy sobs shook her breast.

Hours passed—the pleasures of the dinner-table ended, the sound of singing and dancing was heard, the candle burned itself out, but the maiden still remained motionless on the moonlit floor at the feet of an image of the Mother of Jesus.

Gradually the house became quiet again, the lights were extinguished, and Aunt Isabel once more knocked at the door.

“Well, she’s gone to sleep,” said the old woman, aloud. “As she’s young and has no cares, she sleeps like a corpse.”

When all was silence she raised herself slowly and threw a look about her. She saw the azotea with its little arbors bathed in the ghostly light of the moon.

“An untroubled future! She sleeps like a corpse!” she repeated in a low voice as she made her way out to the azotea.

The city slept. Only from time to time there was heard the noise of a carriage crossing the wooden bridge over the river, whose undisturbed waters reflected smoothly the light of the moon. The young woman raised her eyes toward a sky as clear as sapphire. Slowly she took the rings from her fingers and from her ears and removed the combs from her hair. Placing them on the balustrade of the azotea, she gazed toward the river.

A small banka loaded with zacate stopped at the foot of the landing such as every house on the bank of the river has. [468]One of two men who were in it ran up the stone stairway and jumped over the wall, and a few seconds later his footsteps were heard on the stairs leading to the azotea.
Maria Clara saw him pause on discovering her, but only for a moment. Then he advanced slowly and stopped within a few paces of her. Maria Clara recoiled.

“Crisostomo!” she murmured, overcome with fright.

“Yes, I am Crisostomo,” replied the young man gravely. “An enemy, a man who has every reason for hating me, Elias, has rescued me from the prison into which my friends threw me.”

A sad silence followed these words. Maria Clara bowed her head and let her arms fall.

Ibarra went on: “Beside my mother’s corpse I swore that I would make you happy, whatever might be my destiny! You can have been faithless to your oath, for she was not your mother; but I, I who am her son, hold her memory so sacred that in spite of a thousand difficulties I have come here to carry mine out, and fate has willed that I should speak to you yourself. Maria, we shall never see each other again—you are young and perhaps some day your conscience may reproach you—I have come to tell you, before I go away forever, that I forgive you. Now, may you be happy and—farewell!”

Ibarra started to move away, but the girl stopped him.

“Crisostomo,” she said, “God has sent you to save me from desperation. Hear me and then judge me!”

Ibarra tried gently to draw away from her. “I didn’t come to call you to account! I came to give you peace!”

“I don’t want that peace which you bring me. Peace I will give myself. You despise me and your contempt will embitter all the rest of my life.”

Ibarra read the despair and sorrow depicted in the suffering girl’s face and asked her what she wished.

“That you believe that I have always loved you!”

At this he smiled bitterly.

“Ah, you doubt me! You doubt the friend of your [469]childhood, who has never hidden a single thought from you!” the maiden exclaimed sorrowfully. “I understand now! But when you hear my story, the sad story that was revealed to me during my illness, you will have mercy on me, you

will not have that smile for my sorrow. Why did you not let me die in the hands of my ignorant physician? You and I both would have been happier!" Resting a moment, she then went on: "You have desired it, you have doubted me! But may my mother forgive me! On one of the sorrowfulest of my nights of suffering, a man revealed to me the name of my real father and forbade me to love you—except that my father himself should pardon the injury you had done him."

Ibarra recoiled a pace and gazed fearfully at her.

"Yes," she continued, "that man told me that he could not permit our union, since his conscience would forbid it, and that he would be obliged to reveal the name of my real father at the risk of causing a great scandal, for my father is—" And she murmured into the youth's ear a name in so low a tone that only he could have heard it.

"What was I to do? Must I sacrifice to my love the memory of my mother, the honor of my supposed father, and the good name of the real one? Could I have done that without having even you despise me?"

"But the proof! Had you any proof? You needed proofs!" exclaimed Ibarra, trembling with emotion.

The maiden snatched two papers from her bosom.

"Two letters of my mother's, two letters written in the midst of her remorse, while I was yet unborn! Take them, read them, and you will see how she cursed me and wished for my death, which my father vainly tried to bring about with drugs. These letters he had forgotten in a building where he had lived; the other man found and preserved them and only gave them up to me in exchange for your letter, in order to assure himself, so he said, that I would not marry you without the consent of my father. Since I have been carrying them about with me, in place of your [470]letter, I have, felt the chill in my heart. I sacrificed you, I sacrificed my love! What else could one do for a dead mother and two living fathers? Could I have suspected the use that was to be made of your letter?"
Ibarra stood appalled, while she continued: "What more was left for me to do? Could I perhaps tell you who my father was, could I tell you that you should beg forgiveness of him who made your father suffer so much? Could I ask my father that he forgive you, could I tell him that I knew that I was

his daughter—him, who desired my death so eagerly? It was only left to me to suffer, to guard the secret, and to die suffering! Now, my friend, now that you know the sad history of your poor Maria, will you still have for her that disdainful smile?"

"Maria, you are an angel!"

"Then I am happy, since you believe me—"

"But yet," added the youth with a change of tone, "I've heard that you are going to be married."

"Yes," sobbed the girl, "my father demands this sacrifice. He has loved me and cared for me when it was not his duty to do so, and I will pay this debt of gratitude to assure his peace, by means of this new relationship, but—"

"But what?"

"I will never forget the vows of faithfulness that I have made to you."

"What are you thinking of doing?" asked Ibarra, trying to read the look in her eyes.

"The future is dark and my destiny is wrapped in gloom! I don't know what I should do. But know, that I have loved but once and that without love I will never belong to any man. And you, what is going to become of you?"

"I am only a fugitive, I am fleeing. In a little while my flight will have been discovered. Maria—"

Maria Clara caught the youth's head in her hands and kissed him repeatedly on the lips, embraced him, and drew abruptly away. "Go, go!" she cried. "Go, and farewell!"

[471]Ibarra gazed at her with shining eyes, but at a gesture from her moved away—intoxicated, wavering.
Once again he leaped over the wall and stepped into the banka. Maria Clara, leaning over the balustrade, watched him depart. Elias took off his hat and bowed to her profoundly.[472]

[1]Believe me, cousin ... what has happened, has happened; let us give thanks to God that you are not in the Marianas Islands, planting camotes. (It may be observed that here, as in some of his other speeches, Don Primitivo's Latin is rather Philippinized.)—TR.

[2]The original is in the *lingua franca* of the Philippine Chinese, a medium of expression *sui generis*, being, like, Ulysses, "a part of all that he has met," and defying characteristic translation: "No siya ostí gongon; miligen li Antipolo esi! Esi pueli más con tolo; no siya ostí gongong!"—TR.

[3]"Si esi no hómole y no pataylo, mujé juete-juete!"

[4]The Spanish battle-cry: "St. James, and charge, Spain!"—TR.

[Contents]

Chapter LXI
The Chase on the Lake

“Listen, sir, to the plan that I have worked out,” said Elias thoughtfully, as they moved in the direction of San Gabriel. “I’ll hide you now in the house of a friend of mine in Mandaluyong. I’ll bring you all your money, which I saved and buried at the foot of the balete in the mysterious tomb of your grandfather. Then you will leave the country.”

“To go abroad?” inquired Ibarra.

“To live out in peace the days of life that remain to you. You have friends in Spain, you are rich, you can get yourself pardoned. In every way a foreign country is for us a better fatherland than our own.”

Crisostomo did not answer, but meditated in silence. At that moment they reached the Pasig and the banka began to ascend the current. Over the Bridge of Spain a horseman galloped rapidly, while a shrill, prolonged whistle was heard.

“Elias,” said Ibarra, “you owe your misfortunes to my family, you have saved my life twice, and I owe you not only gratitude but also the restitution of your fortune. You advise me to go abroad—then come with me and we will live like brothers. Here you also are wretched.”

Elias shook his head sadly and answered: “Impossible! It’s true that I cannot love or be happy in my country, but I can suffer and die in it, and perhaps for it—that is always something. May the misfortunes of my native land be my own misfortunes and, although no noble sentiment unites us, although our hearts do not beat to a single name, at least may the common calamity bind me to [473]my countrymen, at least may I weep over our sorrows with them, may the same hard fate oppress all our hearts alike!”
“Then why do you advise me to go away?”

“Because in some other country you could be happy while I could not, because you are not made to suffer, and because you would hate your country if some day you should see yourself ruined in its cause, and to hate one’s native land is the greatest of calamities.”

“You are unfair to me!” exclaimed Ibarra with bitter reproach. “You forget that scarcely had I arrived here when I set myself to seek its welfare.”

“Don’t be offended, sir, I was not reproaching you at all. Would that all of us could imitate you! But I do not ask impossibilities of you and I mean no offense when I say that your heart deceives you. You loved your country because your father taught you to do so; you loved it because in it you had affection, fortune, youth, because everything smiled on you, your country had done you no injustice; you loved it as we love anything that makes us happy. But the day in which you see yourself poor and hungry, persecuted, betrayed, and sold by your own countrymen, on that day you will disown yourself, your country, and all mankind.”

“Your words pain me,” said Ibarra resentfully.

Elias bowed his head and meditated before replying. “I wish to disillusion you, sir, and save you from a sad future. Recall that night when I talked to you in this same banka under the light of this same moon, not a month ago. Then you were happy, the plea of the unfortunates did not touch you; you disdained their complaints because they were the complaints of criminals; you paid more attention to their enemies, and in spite of my arguments and petitions, you placed yourself on the side of their oppressors. On you then depended whether I should turn criminal or allow myself to be killed in order to carry out a sacred pledge, but God has not permitted this because the old chief of the outlaws [474]is dead. A month has hardly passed and you think otherwise.”

“You’re right, Elias, but man is a creature of circumstances! Then I was blind, annoyed—what did I know? Now misfortune has torn the bandage from my eyes; the solitude and misery of my prison have taught me; now I see the horrible cancer which feeds upon this society, which clutches its flesh, and which demands a violent rooting out. They have opened my eyes, they have made me see the sore, and they force me to be a criminal! Since they wish it, I will be a filibuster, a real filibuster, I mean. I will call together all the unfortunates, all who feel a heart beat in their breasts, all those who were sending you to me. No, I will not be a criminal, never is he such who fights for his native land, but quite the reverse! We, during three centuries, have extended them our hands, we have asked love of them, we have yearned to call them brothers, and how do they answer us? With

insults and jests, denying us even the chance character of human beings. There is no God, there is no hope, there is no humanity; there is nothing but the right of might!" Ibarra was nervous, his whole body trembled.

As they passed in front of the Captain-General's palace they thought that they could discern movement and excitement among the guards.

"Can they have discovered your flight?" murmured Elias. "Lie down, sir, so that I can cover you with zacate. Since we shall pass near the powder-magazine it may seem suspicious to the sentinel that there are two of us."

The banka was one of those small, narrow canoes that do not seem to float but rather to glide over the top of the water. As Elias had foreseen, the sentinel stopped him and inquired whence he came.

"From Manila, to carry zacate to the judges and curates," he answered, imitating the accent of the people of Pandakan.

A sergeant came out to learn what was happening. "Move on!" he said to Elias. "But I warn you not to take [475]anybody into your banka. A prisoner has just escaped. If you capture him and turn him over to me I'll give you a good tip."
"All right, sir. What's his description?"

"He wears a sack coat and talks Spanish. So look out!" The banka moved away. Elias looked back and watched the silhouette of the sentinel standing on the bank of the river.

"We'll lose a few minutes' time," he said in a low voice. "We must go into the Beata River to pretend that I'm from Peñafrancia. You will see the river of which Francisco Baltazar sang."

The town slept in the moonlight, and Crisostomo rose up to admire the sepulchral peace of nature. The river was narrow and the level land on either side covered with grass. Elias threw his cargo out on the bank and, after removing a large piece of bamboo, took from under the grass some empty palm-leaf sacks. Then they continued on their way.

"You are the master of your own will, sir, and of your future," he said to Crisostomo, who had remained silent. "But if you will allow me an observation, I would say: think well what you are planning to do—you are

going to light the flames of war, since you have money and brains, and you will quickly find many to join you, for unfortunately there are plenty of malcontents. But in this struggle which you are going to undertake, those who will suffer most will be the defenseless and the innocent. The same sentiments that a month ago impelled me to appeal to you asking for reforms are those that move me now to urge you to think well. The country, sir, does not think of separating from the mother country; it only asks for a little freedom, justice, and affection. You will be supported by the malcontents, the criminals, the desperate, but the people will hold aloof. You are mistaken if, seeing all dark, you think that the country is desperate. The country suffers, yes, but it still hopes and trusts and will only rebel when it has lost its patience, that is, when those who govern it wish it to [476]do so, and that time is yet distant. I myself will not follow you, never will I resort to such extreme measures while I see hope in men."
"Then I'll go on without you!" responded Ibarra resolutely.

"Is your decision final?"

"Final and firm; let the memory of my mother bear witness! I will not let peace and happiness be torn away from me with impunity, I who desired only what was good, I who have respected everything and endured everything out of love for a hypocritical religion and out of love of country. How have they answered me? By burying me in an infamous dungeon and robbing me of my intended wife! No, not to avenge myself would be a crime, it would be encouraging them to new acts of injustice! No, it would be cowardice, pusillanimity, to groan and weep when there is blood and life left, when to insult and menace is added mockery. I will call out these ignorant people, I will make them see their misery. I will teach them to think not of brotherhood but only that they are wolves for devouring, I will urge them to rise against this oppression and proclaim the eternal right of man to win his freedom!"

"But innocent people will suffer!"

"So much the better! Can you take me to the mountains?"

"Until you are in safety," replied Elias.

Again they moved out into the Pasig, talking from time to time of indifferent matters.

“Santa Ana!” murmured Ibarra. “Do you recognize this building?” They were passing in front of the country-house of the Jesuits.

“There I spent many pleasant and happy days!” sighed Elias. “In my time we came every month. Then I was like others, I had a fortune, family, I dreamed, I looked forward to a future. In those days I saw my sister in the near-by college, she presented me with a piece of her own [477]embroidery-work. A friend used to accompany her, a beautiful girl. All that has passed like a dream.”

They remained silent until they reached Malapad-na-bato.1 Those who have ever made their way by night up the Pasig, on one of those magical nights that the Philippines offers, when the moon pours out from the limpid blue her melancholy light, when the shadows hide the miseries of man and the silence is unbroken by the sordid accents of his voice, when only Nature speaks—they will understand the thoughts of both these youths.

At Malapad-na-bato the carbineer was sleepy and, seeing that the banka was empty and offered no booty which he might seize, according to the traditional usage of his corps and the custom of that post, he easily let them pass on. Nor did the civil-guard at Pasig suspect anything, so they were not molested.

Day was beginning to break when they reached the lake, still and calm like a gigantic mirror. The moon paled and the east was dyed in rosy tints. Some distance away they perceived a gray mass advancing slowly toward them.

“The police boat is coming,” murmured Elias. “Lie down and I’ll cover you with these sacks.”

The outlines of the boat became clearer and plainer.

“It’s getting between us and the shore,” observed Elias uneasily.

Gradually he changed the course of his banka, rowing toward Binangonan. To his great surprise he noticed that the boat also changed its course, while a voice called to him.

Elias stopped rowing and reflected. The shore was still far away and they would soon be within range of the [478]rifles on the police boat. He thought of returning to Pasig, for his banka was the swifter of the two boats, but

unluckily he saw another boat coming from the river and made out the gleam of caps and bayonets of the Civil Guard.
"We're caught!" he muttered, turning pale.

He gazed at his robust arms and, adopting the only course left, began to row with all his might toward Talim Island, just as the sun was rising.

The banka slipped rapidly along. Elias saw standing on the boat, which had veered about, some men making signals to him.

"Do you know how to manage a banka?" he asked Ibarra.

"Yes, why?"

"Because we are lost if I don't jump into the water and throw them off the track. They will pursue me, but I swim and dive well. I'll draw them away from you and then you can save yourself."

"No, stay here, and we'll sell our lives dearly!"

"That would be useless. We have no arms and with their rifles they would shoot us down like birds."

At that instant the water gave forth a hiss such as is caused by the falling of hot metal into it, followed instantaneously by a loud report.

"You see!" said Elias, placing the paddle in the boat. "We'll see each other on Christmas Eve at the tomb of your grandfather. Save yourself."

"And you?"

"God has carried me safely through greater perils."

As Elias took off his camisa a bullet tore it from his hands and two loud reports were heard. Calmly he clasped the hand of Ibarra, who was still stretched out in the bottom of the banka. Then he arose and leaped into the water, at the same time pushing the little craft away from him with his foot.

Cries resounded, and soon some distance away the [479]youth's head appeared, as if for breathing, then instantly disappeared.
"There, there he is!" cried several voices, and again the bullets whistled.

The police boat and the boat from the Pasig now started in pursuit of him. A light track indicated his passage through the water as he drew farther and farther away from Ibarra's banka, which floated about as if abandoned. Every time the swimmer lifted his head above the water to breathe, the guards in both boats shot at him.

So the chase continued. Ibarra's little banka was now far away and the swimmer was approaching the shore, distant some thirty yards. The rowers were tired, but Elias was in the same condition, for he showed his head oftener, and each time in a different direction, as if to disconcert his pursuers. No longer did the treacherous track indicate the position of the diver. They saw him for the last time when he was some ten yards from the shore, and fired. Then minute after minute passed, but nothing again appeared above the still and solitary surface of the lake.

Half an hour afterwards one of the rowers claimed that he could distinguish in the water near the shore traces of blood, but his companions shook their heads dubiously.[480]

1The "wide rock" that formerly jutted out into the river just below the place where the streams from the Lake of Bay join the Mariquina to form the Pasig proper. This spot was celebrated in the demonology of the primitive Tagalogs and later, after the tutelar devils had been duly exorcised by the Spanish padres, converted into a revenue station. The name is preserved in that of the little barrio on the river bank near Fort McKinley.—TR.

[Contents]

Chapter LXII
Padre Damaso Explains

Vainly were the rich wedding presents heaped upon a table; neither the diamonds in their cases of blue velvet, nor the piña embroideries, nor the rolls of silk, drew the gaze of Maria Clara. Without reading or even seeing it the maiden sat staring at the newspaper which gave an account of the death of Ibarra, drowned in the lake.

Suddenly she felt two hands placed over her eyes to hold her fast and heard Padre Damaso's voice ask merrily, "Who am I? Who am I?"

Maria Clara sprang from her seat and gazed at him in terror.

"Foolish little girl, you're not afraid, are you? You weren't expecting me, eh? Well, I've come in from the provinces to attend your wedding."

He smiled with satisfaction as he drew nearer to her and held out his hand for her to kiss. Maria Clara approached him tremblingly and touched his hand respectfully to her lips.

"What's the matter with you, Maria?" asked the Franciscan, losing his merry smile and becoming uneasy. "Your hand is cold, you're pale. Are you ill, little girl?"

Padre Damaso drew her toward himself with a tenderness that one would hardly have thought him capable of, and catching both her hands in his questioned her with his gaze.

"Don't you have confidence in your godfather any more?" he asked reproachfully. "Come, sit down and tell me your little troubles as you used to do when you were a child, when you wanted tapers to make wax dolls, You [481]know that I've always loved you, I've never been cross with you." His voice was now no longer brusque, and even became tenderly modulated. Maria Clara began to weep.

"You're crying, little girl? Why do you cry? Have you quarreled with Linares?"

Maria Clara covered her ears. "Don't speak of him not now!" she cried.

Padre Damaso gazed at her in startled wonder.

“Won’t you trust me with your secrets? Haven’t I always tried to satisfy your lightest whim?”

The maiden raised eyes filled with tears and stared at him for a long time, then again fell to weeping bitterly.

“Don’t cry so, little girl. Your tears hurt me. Tell me your troubles, and you’ll see how your godfather loves you!”

Maria Clara approached him slowly, fell upon her knees, and raising her tear-stained face toward his asked in a low, scarcely audible tone, “Do you still love me?”

“Child!”

“Then, protect my father and break off my marriage!” Here the maiden told of her last interview with Ibarra, concealing only her knowledge of the secret of her birth. Padre Damaso could scarcely credit his ears.

“While he lived,” the girl continued, “I thought of struggling, I was hoping, trusting! I wanted to live so that I might hear of him, but now that they have killed him, now there is no reason why I should live and suffer.” She spoke in low, measured tones, calmly, tearlessly.

“But, foolish girl, isn’t Linares a thousand times better than—”

“While he lived, I could have married—I thought of running away afterwards—my father wants only the relationship! But now that he is dead, no other man shall call me wife! While he was alive I could debase myself, for there would have remained the consolation that he lived [482]and perhaps thought of me, but now that he is dead—the nunnery or the tomb!”
The girl’s voice had a ring of firmness in it such that Padre Damaso lost his merry air and became very thoughtful.

“Did you love him as much as that?” he stammered.

Maria Clara did not answer. Padre Damaso dropped his head on his chest and remained silent for a long time.

“Daughter in God,” he exclaimed at length in a broken voice, “forgive me for having made you unhappy without knowing it. I was thinking of your future, I desired your happiness. How could I permit you to marry a native of the country, to see you an unhappy wife and a wretched mother? I couldn’t get that love out of your head even though I opposed it with all my might. I committed wrongs, for you, solely for you. If you had become his wife you would have mourned afterwards over the condition of your husband, exposed to all kinds of vexations without means of defense. As a mother you would have mourned the fate of your sons: if you had educated them, you would have prepared for them a sad future, for they would have become enemies of Religion and you would have seen them garroted or exiled; if you had kept them ignorant, you would have seen them tyrannized over and degraded. I could not consent to it! For this reason I sought for you a husband that could make you the happy mother of sons who would command and not obey, who would punish and not suffer. I knew that the friend of your childhood was good, I liked him as well as his father, but I have hated them both since I saw that they were going to bring about your unhappiness, because I love you, I adore you, I love you as one loves his own daughter! Yours is my only affection; I have seen you grow—not an hour has passed that I have not thought of you—I dreamed of you—you have been my only joy!”

Here Padre Damaso himself broke out into tears like a child.

[483]“Then, as you love me, don’t make me eternally wretched. He no longer lives, so I want to be a nun!”

The old priest rested his forehead on his hand. “To be a nun, a nun!” he repeated. “You don’t know, child, what the life is, the mystery that is hidden behind the walls of the nunnery, you don’t know! A thousand times would I prefer to see you unhappy in the world rather than in the cloister. Here your complaints can be heard, there you will have only the walls. You are beautiful, very beautiful, and you were not born for that—to be a bride of Christ! Believe me, little girl, time will wipe away everything. Later on you will forget, you will love, you will love your husband—Linares.”

“The nunnery or—death!”

“The nunnery, the nunnery, or death!” exclaimed Padre Damaso. “Maria, I am now an old man, I shall not be able much longer to watch over you and

your welfare. Choose something else, seek another love, some other man, whoever he may be—anything but the nunnery."

"The nunnery or death!"

"My God, my God!" cried the priest, covering his head with his hands, "Thou chastisest me, so let it be! But watch over my daughter!"

Then, turning again to the young woman, he said, "You wish to be a nun, and it shall be so. I don't want you to die."

Maria Clara caught both his hands in hers, clasping and kissing them as she fell upon her knees, repeating over and over, "My godfather, I thank you, my godfather!"

With bowed head Fray Damaso went away, sad and sighing. "God, Thou dost exist, since Thou chastisest! But let Thy vengeance fall on me, harm not the innocent. Save Thou my daughter!"[484]
[Contents]

Chapter LXIII
Christmas Eve

High up on the slope of the mountain near a roaring stream a hut built on the gnarled logs hides itself among the trees. Over its kogon thatch clambers the branching gourd-vine, laden with flowers and fruit. Deer antlers and skulls of wild boar, some with long tusks, adorn this mountain home, where lives a Tagalog family engaged in hunting and cutting firewood.

In the shade of a tree the grandsire was making brooms from the fibers of palm leaves, while a young woman was placing eggs, limes, and some vegetables in a wide basket. Two children, a boy and a girl, were playing by the side of another, who, pale and sad, with large eyes and a deep gaze, was seated on a fallen tree-trunk. In his thinned features we recognize Sisa's son, Basilio, the brother of Crispin.

"When your foot gets well," the little girl was saying to him, "we'll play hide-and-seek. I'll be the leader."

"You'll go up to the top of the mountain with us," added the little boy, "and drink deer blood with lime-juice and you'll get fat, and then I'll teach you how to jump from rock to rock above the torrent."

Basilio smiled sadly, stared at the sore on his foot, and then turned his gaze toward the sun, which shone resplendently.

"Sell these brooms," said the grandfather to the young woman, "and buy something for the children, for tomorrow is Christmas."

"Firecrackers, I want some firecrackers!" exclaimed the boy.

[485]"I want a head for my doll," cried the little girl, catching hold of her sister's tapis.
"And you, what do you want?" the grandfather asked Basilio, who at the question arose laboriously and approached the old man.

"Sir," he said, "I've been sick more than a month now, haven't I?"

“Since we found you lifeless and covered with wounds, two moons have come and gone. We thought you were going to die.”

“May God reward you, for we are very poor,” replied Basilio. “But now that tomorrow is Christmas I want to go to the town to see my mother and my little brother. They will be seeking for me.”

“But, my son, you’re not yet well, and your town is far away. You won’t get there by midnight.”

“That doesn’t matter, sir. My mother and my little brother must be very sad. Every year we spend this holiday together. Last year the three of us had a whole fish to eat. My mother will have been mourning and looking for me.”

“You won’t get to the town alive, boy! Tonight we’re going to have chicken and wild boar’s meat. My sons will ask for you when they come from the field.”

“You have many sons while my mother has only us two. Perhaps she already believes that I’m dead! Tonight I want to give her a pleasant surprise, a Christmas gift, a son.”

The old man felt the tears springing up into his eyes, so, placing his hands on the boy’s head, he said with emotion: “You’re like an old man! Go, look for your mother, give her the Christmas gift—from God, as you say. If I had known the name of your town I would have gone there when you were sick. Go, my son, and may God and the Lord Jesus go with you. Lucia, my granddaughter, will go with you to the nearest town.”

“What! You’re going away?” the little boy asked him. [486]“Down there are soldiers and many robbers. Don’t you want to see my firecrackers? Boom, boom, boom!”
“Don’t you want to play hide-and-seek?” asked the little girl. “Have you ever played it? Surely there’s nothing any more fun than to be chased and hide yourself?”

Basilio smiled, but with tears in his eyes, and caught up his staff. “I’ll come back soon,” he answered. “I’ll bring my little brother, you’ll see him and play with him. He’s just about as big as you are.”

“Does he walk lame, too?” asked the little girl. “Then we’ll make him ‘it’ when we play hide-and-seek.”

“Don’t forget us,” the old man said to him. “Take this dried meat as a present to your mother.”

The children accompanied him to the bamboo bridge swung over the noisy course of the stream. Lucia made him support himself on her arm, and thus they disappeared from the children’s sight, Basilio walking along nimbly in spite of his bandaged leg.

The north wind whistled by, making the inhabitants of San Diego shiver with cold. It was Christmas Eve and yet the town was wrapped in gloom. Not a paper lantern hung from the windows nor did a single sound in the houses indicate the rejoicing of other years.

In the house of Capitan Basilio, he and Don Filipo—for the misfortunes of the latter had made them friendly—were standing by a window-grating and talking, while at another were Sinang, her cousin Victoria, and the beautiful Iday, looking toward the street.

The waning moon began to shine over the horizon, illumining the clouds and making the trees and houses east long, fantastic shadows.

“Yours is not a little good fortune, to get off free in these times!” said Capitan Basilio to Don Filipo. “They’ve burned your books, yes, but others have lost more.”

A woman approached the grating and gazed into the interior. Her eyes glittered, her features were emaciated, [487]her hair loose and dishevelled. The moonlight gave her a weird aspect.
“Sisal” exclaimed Don Filipo in surprise. Then turning to Capitan Basilio, as the madwoman ran away, he asked, “Wasn’t she in the house of a physician? Has she been cured?”

Capitan Basilio smiled bitterly. “The physician was afraid they would accuse him of being a friend of Don Crisostomo’s, so he drove her from his house. Now she wanders about again as crazy as ever, singing, harming no one, and living in the woods.”

“What else has happened in the town since we left it? I know that we have a new curate and another alferez.”

“These are terrible times, humanity is retrograding,” murmured Capitan Basilio, thinking of the past. “The day after you left they found the senior sacristan dead, hanging from a rafter in his own house. Padre Salvi was greatly affected by his death and took possession of all his papers. Ah, yes, the old Sage, Tasio, also died and was buried in the Chinese cemetery.”

“Poor old man!” sighed Don Filipo. “What became of his books?”

“They were burned by the pious, who thought thus to please God. I was unable to save anything, not even Cicero’s works. The gobernadorcillo did nothing to prevent it.”

Both became silent. At that moment the sad and melancholy song of the madwoman was heard.

“Do you know when Maria Clara is to be married?” Iday asked Sinang.

“I don’t know,” answered the latter. “I received a letter from her but haven’t opened it for fear of finding out. Poor Crisostomo!”

“They say that if it were not for Linares, they would hang Capitan Tiago, so what was Maria Clara going to do?” observed Victoria.

A boy limped by, running toward the plaza, whence [488]came the notes of Sisa’s song. It was Basilio, who had found his home deserted and in ruins. After many inquiries he had only learned that his mother was insane and wandering about the town—of Crispin not a word.

Basilio choked back his tears, stifled any expression of his sorrow, and without resting had started in search of his mother. On reaching the town he was just asking about her when her song struck his ears. The unhappy boy overcame the trembling in his limbs and ran to throw himself into his mother’s arms.

The madwoman left the plaza and stopped in front of the house of the new alferez. Now, as formerly, there was a sentinel before the door, and a woman’s head appeared at the window, only it was not the Medusa’s but that of a comely young woman: alferez and unfortunate are not synonymous terms.

Sisa began to sing before the house with her gaze fixed on the moon, which soared majestically in the blue heavens among golden clouds. Basilio saw her, but did not dare to approach' her. Walking back and forth, but taking care not to get near the barracks, he waited for the time when she would leave that place.

The young woman who was at the window listening attentively to the madwoman's song ordered the sentinel to bring her inside, but when Sisa saw the soldier approach her and heard his voice she was filled with terror and took to flight at a speed of which only a demented person is capable. Basilio, fearing to lose her, ran after her, forgetful of the pains in his feet.

"Look how that boy's chasing the madwoman!" indignantly exclaimed a woman in the street. Seeing that he continued to pursue her, she picked up a stone and threw it at him, saying, "Take that! It's a pity that the dog is tied up!"

Basilio felt a blow on his head, but paid no attention to it as he continued running. Dogs barked, geese cackled, several windows opened to let out curious faces but [489]quickly closed again from fear of another night of terror.

Soon they were outside of the town. Sisa began to moderate her flight, but still a great distance separated her from her pursuer.

"Mother!" he called to her when he caught sight of her. Scarcely had the madwoman heard his voice when she again took to flight.

"Mother, it's I!" cried the boy in desperation, but the madwoman did not heed him, so he followed panting. They had now passed the cultivated fields and were near the wood; Basilio saw his mother enter it and he also went in. The bushes and shrubs, the thorny vines and projecting roots of trees, hindered the movements of both. The son followed his mother's shadowy form as it was revealed from time to time by the moonlight that penetrated through the foliage and into the open spaces. They were in the mysterious wood of the Ibarra family.

The boy stumbled and fell several times, but rose again, each time without feeling pain. All his soul was centered in his eyes, following the beloved figure. They crossed the sweetly murmuring brook where sharp thorns of

bamboo that had fallen on the sand at its margin pierced his bare feet, but he did not stop to pull them out.

To his great surprise he saw that his mother had plunged into the thick undergrowth and was going through the wooden gateway that opened into the tomb of the old Spaniard at the foot of the balete. Basilio tried to follow her in, but found the gate fastened. The madwoman defended the entrance with her emaciated arms and disheveled head, holding the gate shut with all her might.

“Mother, it’s I, it’s I! I’m Basilio, your son!” cried the boy as he let himself fall weakly.

But the madwoman did not yield. Bracing herself with her feet on the ground, she offered an energetic resistance. Basilio beat the gate with his fists, with his Mood-stained head, he wept, but in vain. Painfully he arose and examined [490]the wall, thinking to scale it, but found no way to do so. He then walked around it and noticed that a branch of the fateful balete was crossed with one from another tree. This he climbed and, his filial love working miracles, made his way from branch to branch to the balete, from which he saw his mother still holding the gate shut with her head.
The noise made by him among the branches attracted Sisa’s attention. She turned and tried to run, but her son, letting himself fall from the tree, caught her in his arms and covered her with kisses, losing consciousness as he did so.

Sisa saw his blood-stained forehead and bent over him. Her eyes seemed to start from their sockets as she peered into his face. Those pale features stirred the sleeping cells of her brain, so that something like a spark of intelligence flashed up in her mind and she recognized her son. With a terrible cry she fell upon the insensible body of the boy, embracing and kissing him. Mother and son remained motionless.

When Basilio recovered consciousness he found his mother lifeless. He called to her with the tenderest names, but she did not awake. Noticing that she was not even breathing, he arose and went to the neighboring brook to get some water in a banana leaf, with which to rub the pallid face of his mother, but the madwoman made not the least movement and her eyes remained closed.

Basilio gazed at her in terror. He placed his ear over her heart, but the thin, faded breast was cold, and her heart no longer beat. He put his lips to hers, but felt no breathing. The miserable boy threw his arms about the corpse and wept bitterly.

The moon gleamed majestically in the sky, the wandering breezes sighed, and down in the grass the crickets chirped. The night of light and joy for so many children, who in the warm bosom of the family celebrate this feast of sweetest memories—the feast which commemorates the [491]first look of love that Heaven sent to earth—this night when in all Christian families they eat, drink, dance, sing, laugh, play, caress, and kiss one another—this night, which in cold countries holds such magic for childhood with its traditional pine-tree covered with lights, dolls, candies, and tinsel, whereon gaze the round, staring eyes in which innocence alone is reflected—this night brought to Basilio only orphanhood. Who knows but that perhaps in the home whence came the taciturn Padre Salvi children also played, perhaps they sang

> "La Nochebuena se viene,
> La Nochebuena se va."[1]

For a long time the boy wept and moaned. When at last he raised his head he saw a man standing over him, gazing at the scene in silence.

"Are you her son?" asked the unknown in a low voice.

The boy nodded.

"What do you expect to do?"

"Bury her!"

"In the cemetery?"

"I haven't any money and, besides, the curate wouldn't allow it."

"Then?"

"If you would help me—"

"I'm very weak," answered the unknown as he sank slowly to the ground, supporting himself with both hands. "I'm wounded. For two days I haven't eaten or slept. Has no one come here tonight?"

The man thoughtfully contemplated the attractive features of the boy, then went on in a still weaker voice, “Listen! I, too, shall be dead before the day comes. Twenty paces from here, on the other side of the brook, there is a big pile of firewood. Bring it here, make a pyre, put our bodies upon it, cover them over, and set fire to the whole—fire, until we are reduced to ashes!”

[492]Basilio listened attentively.
“Afterwards, if no one comes, dig here. You will find a lot of gold and it will all be yours. Take it and go to school.”

The voice of the unknown was becoming every moment more unintelligible. “Go, get the firewood. I want to help you.”

As Basilio moved away, the unknown turned his face toward the east and murmured, as though praying:

“I die without seeing the dawn brighten over my native land! You, who have it to see, welcome it—and forget not those who have fallen during the night!”

He raised his eyes to the sky and his lips continued to move, as if uttering a prayer. Then he bowed his head and sank slowly to the earth.

Two hours later Sister Rufa was on the back veranda of her house making her morning ablutions in order to attend mass. The pious woman gazed at the adjacent wood and saw a thick column of smoke rising from it. Filled with holy indignation, she knitted her eyebrows and exclaimed:

“What heretic is making a clearing on a holy day? That’s why so many calamities come! You ought to go to purgatory and see if you could get out of there, savage!”[493]

1A Christmas carol: “Christmas night is coming, Christmas night is going.”—TR.

[Contents]

Epilogue

Since some of our characters are still living and others have been lost sight of, a real epilogue is impossible. For the satisfaction of the groundlings we should gladly kill off all of them, beginning with Padre Salvi and ending with Doña Victorina, but this is not possible. Let them live! Anyhow, the country, not ourselves, has to support them.

After Maria Clara entered the nunnery, Padre Damaso left his town to live in Manila, as did also Padre Salvi, who, while he awaits a vacant miter, preaches sometimes in the church of St. Clara, in whose nunnery he discharges the duties of an important office. Not many months had passed when Padre Damaso received an order from the Very Reverend Father Provincial to occupy a curacy in a remote province. It is related that he was so grievously affected by this that on the following day he was found dead in his bedchamber. Some said that he had died of an apoplectic stroke, others of a nightmare, but his physician dissipated all doubts by declaring that he had died suddenly.

None of our readers would now recognize Capitan Tiago. Weeks before Maria Clara took the vows he fell into a state of depression so great that he grew sad and thin, and became pensive and distrustful, like his former friend, Capitan Tinong. As soon as the doors of the nunnery closed he ordered his disconsolate cousin, Aunt Isabel, to collect whatever had belonged to his daughter and his dead wife and to go to make her home in Malabon or San Diego, since he wished to live alone thenceforward, tie then devoted himself passionately to *liam-pó* and the cockpit, and began to smoke opium. He no longer goes to Antipolo nor does he order any more masses, so Doña Patrocinia, his old rival, [494]celebrates her triumph piously by snoring during the sermons. If at any time during the late afternoon you should walk along Calle Santo Cristo, you would see seated in a Chinese shop a small man, yellow, thin, and bent, with stained and dirty finger nails, gazing through dreamy, sunken eyes at the passers-by as if he did not see them. At nightfall you would see him rise with difficulty and, supporting himself on his cane, make his way to a narrow little by-street to enter a grimy building over the door of which may be seen in large red letters: FUMADERO PUBLICO DE ANFION.[1] This is that Capitan Tiago who

was so celebrated, but who is now completely forgotten, even by the very senior sacristan himself.

Doña Victorina has added to her false frizzes and to her *Andalusization*, if we may be permitted the term, the new custom of driving the carriage horses herself, obliging Don Tiburcio to remain quiet. Since many unfortunate accidents occurred on account of the weakness of her eyes, she has taken to wearing spectacles, which give her a marvelous appearance. The doctor has never been called upon again to attend any one and the servants see him many days in the week without teeth, which, as our readers know, is a very bad sign. Linares, the only defender of the hapless doctor, has long been at rest in Paco cemetery, the victim of dysentery and the harsh treatment of his cousin-in-law.

The victorious alferez returned to Spain a major, leaving his amiable spouse in her flannel camisa, the color of which is now indescribable. The poor Ariadne, finding herself thus abandoned, also devoted herself, as did the daughter of Minos, to the cult of Bacchus and the cultivation of tobacco; she drinks and smokes with such fury that now not only the girls but even the old women and little children fear her.

Probably our acquaintances of the town of San Diego are still alive, if they did not perish in the explosion of the steamer "*Lipa*," which was making a trip to the province. [495]Since no one bothered himself to learn who the unfortunates were that perished in that catastrophe or to whom belonged the legs and arms left neglected on Convalescence Island and the banks of the river, we have no idea whether any acquaintance of our readers was among them or not. Along with the government and the press at the time, we are satisfied with the information that the only friar who was on the steamer was saved, and we do not ask for more. The principal thing for us is the existence of the virtuous priests, whose reign in the Philippines may God conserve for the good of our souls.2

Of Maria Clara nothing more is known except that the sepulcher seems to guard her in its bosom. We have asked several persons of great influence in the holy nunnery of St. Clara, but no one has been willing to tell us a single word, not even the talkative devotees who receive the famous fried chicken-livers and the even more famous sauce known as that "of the nuns," prepared by the intelligent cook of the Virgins of the Lord.

Nevertheless: On a night in September the hurricane raged over Manila, lashing the buildings with its gigantic wings. The thunder crashed continuously. Lightning flashes momentarily revealed the havoc wrought by the blast and threw the inhabitants into wild terror. The rain fell in torrents. Each flash of the forked lightning showed a piece of roofing or a window-blind flying through the air to fall with a horrible crash. Not a person or a carriage moved through the streets. When the hoarse reverberations of the thunder, a hundred times re-echoed, lost themselves in the distance, there was heard the soughing of the wind as it drove the raindrops with a continuous tick-tack against the concha-panes of the closed windows.

Two patrolmen sheltered themselves under the eaves of a building near the nunnery, one a private and the other a *distinguido*.

“What’s the use of our staying here?” said the private.

[496]“No one is moving about the streets. We ought to get into a house. My *querida* lives in Calle Arzobispo.”
“From here over there is quite a distance and we’ll get wet,” answered the *distinguido*.

“What does that matter just so the lightning doesn’t strike us?”

“Bah, don’t worry! The nuns surely have a lightningrod to protect them.”

“Yes,” observed the private, “but of what use is it when the night is so dark?”

As he said this he looked upward to stare into the darkness. At that moment a prolonged streak of lightning flashed, followed by a terrific roar.

“*Nakú! Susmariosep!*” exclaimed the private, crossing himself and catching hold of his companion. “Let’s get away from here.”

“What’s happened?”

“Come, come away from here,” he repeated with his teeth rattling from fear.

“What have you seen?”

“A specter!” he murmured, trembling with fright.

“A specter?”

“On the roof there. It must be the nun who practises magic during the night.”

The *distinguido* thrust his head out to look, just as a flash of lightning furrowed the heavens with a vein of fire and sent a horrible crash earthwards. “*Jesús!*” he exclaimed, also crossing himself.

In the brilliant glare of the celestial light he had seen a white figure standing almost on the ridge of the roof with arms and face raised toward the sky as if praying to it. The heavens responded with lightning and thunderbolts!

As the sound of the thunder rolled away a sad plaint was heard.

“That’s not the wind, it’s the specter,” murmured the private, as if in response to the pressure of his companion’s hand.

[497]“Ay! Ay!” came through the air, rising above the noise of the rain, nor could the whistling wind drown that sweet and mournful voice charged with affliction.
Again the lightning flashed with dazzling intensity.

“No, it’s not a specter!” exclaimed the *distinguido*.

“I’ve seen her before. She’s beautiful, like the Virgin! Let’s get away from here and report it.”

The private did not wait for him to repeat the invitation, and both disappeared.

Who was moaning in the middle of the night in spite of the wind and rain and storm? Who was the timid maiden, the bride of Christ, who defied the unchained elements and chose such a fearful night under the open sky to breathe forth from so perilous a height her complaints to God? Had the Lord abandoned his altar in the nunnery so that He no longer heard her supplications? Did its arches perhaps prevent the longings of the soul from rising up to the throne of the Most Merciful?

The tempest raged furiously nearly the whole night, nor did a single star shine through the darkness. The despairing plaints continued to mingle with the soughing of the wind, but they found Nature and man alike deaf; God had hidden himself and heard not.

On the following day, after the dark clouds had cleared away and the sun shone again brightly in the limpid sky, there stopped at the door of the nunnery of St. Clara a carriage, from which alighted a man who made himself known as a representative of the authorities. He asked to be allowed to speak immediately with the abbess and to see all the nuns.

It is said that one of these, who appeared in a gown all wet and torn, with tears and tales of horror begged the man's protection against the outrages of hypocrisy. It is also said that she was very beautiful and had the most lovely and expressive eyes that were ever seen.

The representative of the authorities did not accede to her request, but, after talking with the abbess, left her there in [498]spite of her tears and pleadings. The youthful nun saw the door close behind him as a condemned person might look upon the portals of Heaven closing against him, if ever Heaven should come to be as cruel and unfeeling as men are. The abbess said that she was a madwoman. The man may not have known that there is in Manila a home for the demented; or perhaps he looked upon the nunnery itself as an insane asylum, although it is claimed that he was quite ignorant, especially in a matter of deciding whether a person is of sound mind.
It is also reported that General J——— thought otherwise, when the matter reached his ears. He wished to protect the madwoman and asked for her. But this time no beautiful and unprotected maiden appeared, nor would the abbess permit a visit to the cloister, forbidding it in the name of Religion and the Holy Statutes. Nothing more was said of the affair, nor of the ill-starred Maria Clara.

1Public Opium-Smoking Room.

2January 2, 1883.—*Author's note*.

[499]

[Contents]

Glossary

abá: A Tagalog exclamation of wonder, surprise, etc., often used to introduce or emphasize a contradictory statement.

abaka: "Manila hemp," the fiber of a plant of the banana family.

achara: Pickles made from the tender shoots of bamboo, green papayas, etc.

alcalde: Governor of a province or district with both executive and judicial authority.

alferez: Junior officer of the Civil Guard, ranking next below a lieutenant.

alibambang: A leguminous plant whose acid leaves are used in cooking.

alpay: A variety of nephelium, similar but inferior to the Chinese lichi.

among: Term used by the natives in addressing a priest, especially a friar: from the Spanish **amo**, master.

amores-secos: "Barren loves," a low-growing weed whose small, angular pods adhere to clothing.

andas: A platform with handles, on which an image is borne in a procession.

asuang: A malignant devil reputed to feed upon human flesh, being especially fond of new-born babes.

até: The sweet-sop.

Audiencia: The administrative council and supreme court of the Spanish régime.

Ayuntamiento: A city corporation or council, and by extension the building in which it has its offices; specifically, in Manila, the capitol.

azotea: The flat roof of a house or any similar platform; a roof-garden.

babaye: Woman (the general Malay term).

baguio: The local name for the typhoon or hurricane.

bailúhan: Native dance and feast: from the Spanish **baile**.

balete: The Philippine banyan, a tree sacred in Malay folk-lore.

banka: A dugout canoe with bamboo supports or outriggers.

Bilibid: The general penitentiary at Manila.

buyo: The masticatory prepared by wrapping a piece of areca-nut with a little shell-lime in a betel-leaf: the **pan** of British India.

cabeza de barangay: Headman and tax collector for a group of about fifty families, for whose "tribute" he was personally responsible.

calle: Street.

camisa: 1. A loose, collarless shirt of transparent material worn by men outside the trousers.

2. A thin, transparent waist with flowing sleeves, worn by women.

[500]**camote**: A variety of sweet potato.
capitan: "Captain," a title used in addressing or referring to the gobernadorcillo or a former occupant of that office.

carambas: A Spanish exclamation denoting surprise or displeasure.

carbineer: Internal-revenue guard.

cedula: Certificate of registration and receipt for poll-tax.

chico: The sapodilla plum.

Civil Guard: Internal quasi-military police force of Spanish officers and native soldiers.

cochero: Carriage driver: coachman.

Consul: A wealthy merchant; originally, a member of the **Consulado**, the tribunal, or corporation, controlling the galleon trade.

cuadrillero: Municipal guard.

cuarto: A copper coin, one hundred and sixty of which were equal in value to a silver peso.

cuidao: “Take care!” “Look out!” A common exclamation, from the Spanish **cuidado**.

dálag: The Philippine **Ophiocephalus**, the curious walking mudfish that abounds in the paddy-fields during the rainy season.

dalaga: Maiden, woman of marriageable age.

dinding: House-wall or partition of plaited bamboo wattle.

director, directorcillo: The town secretary and clerk of the gobernadorcillo.

distinguido: A person of rank serving as a private soldier but exempted from menial duties and in promotions preferred to others of equal merit.

escribano: Clerk of court and official notary.

filibuster: A native of the Philippines who was accused of advocating their separation from Spain.

gobernadorcillo: “Petty governor,” the principal municipal official.

gogo: A climbing, woody vine whose macerated stems are used as soap; “soap-vine.”

guingón: Dungaree, a coarse blue cotton cloth.

hermano mayor: The manager of a fiesta.

husi: A fine cloth made of silk interwoven with cotton, abaka, or pineapple-leaf fibers.

ilang-ilang: The Malay “flower of flowers,” from which the well-known essence is obtained.

Indian: The Spanish designation for the Christianized Malay of the Philippines was **indio** (Indian), a term used rather contemptuously, the name **Filipino** being generally applied in a restricted sense to the children of Spaniards born in the Islands.

kaingin: A woodland clearing made by burning off the trees and underbrush, for planting upland rice or camotes.

kalan: The small, portable, open, clay fireplace commonly used in cooking.

kalao: The Philippine hornbill. As in all Malay countries, this bird is the object of curious superstitions. Its raucous cry, which may be faintly characterized as hideous, is said to mark the hours and, in the night-time, to presage death or other disaster.

kalikut: A short section of bamboo in which the **buyo** is mixed; a primitive betel-box.

[501]**kamagon**: A tree of the ebony family, from which fine cabinet-wood is obtained. Its fruit is the **mabolo**, or date-plum.
kasamá: Tenants on the land of another, to whom they render payment in produce or by certain specified services.

kogon: A tall, rank grass used for thatch.

kris: A Moro dagger or short sword with a serpentine blade.

kundíman: A native song.

kupang: A large tree of the Mimosa family.

kuriput: Miser, "skinflint."

lanson: The langsa, a delicious cream-colored fruit about the size of a plum. In the Philippines, its special habitat is the country around the Lake of Bay.

liam-pó: A Chinese game of chance (?).

lomboy: The jambolana, a small, blue fruit with a large stone.

Malacañang: The palace of the Captain-General in Manila: from the vernacular name of the place where it stands, "fishermen's resort."

mankukúlan: An evil spirit causing sickness and other misfortunes, and a person possessed of such a demon.

morisqueta: Rice boiled without salt until dry, the staple food of the Filipinos.

Moro: Mohammedan Malay of southern Mindanao and Sulu.

mutya: Some object with talismanic properties, “rabbit’s foot.”

nakú: A Tagalog exclamation of surprise, wonder, etc.

nipa: Swamp-palm, with the imbricated leaves of which the roots and sides of the common Filipino houses are constructed.

nito: A climbing fern whose glossy, wiry leaves are used for making fine hats, cigar-cases, etc.

novena: A devotion consisting of prayers recited on nine consecutive days, asking for some special favor; also, a booklet of these prayers.

oy: An exclamation to attract attention, used toward inferiors and in familiar intercourse: probably a contraction of the Spanish imperative, **oye**, “listen!”

pakó: An edible fern.

palasán: A thick, stout variety of rattan, used for walking-sticks.

pandakaki: A low tree or shrub with small, star-like flowers.

pañuelo: A starched neckerchief folded stiffly over the shoulders, fastened in front and falling in a point behind: the most distinctive portion of the customary dress of the Filipino women.

papaya: The tropical papaw, fruit of the “melon-tree.”

paracmason: Freemason, the *bête noire* of the Philippine friar.

peseta: A silver coin, in value one-fifth of a peso or thirty-two cuartos.

peso: A silver coin, either the Spanish peso or the Mexican dollar, about the size of an American dollar and of approximately half its value.

piña: Fine cloth made from pineapple-leaf fibers.

proper names: The author has given a simple and sympathetic touch to his story throughout by using the familiar names commonly employed among the Filipinos in their home-life. Some of these are nicknames or pet names, such as Andong, Andoy, Choy, Neneng (“Baby”), Puté, Tinchang, and Yeyeng. Others are abbreviations or corruptions of the Christian names,

often with the particle ng or ay added, which is a common practice: Andeng, Andrea; Doray, Teodora; Iday, Brigida (Bridget); [502]Sinang, Lucinda (Lucy); Sipa, Josefa; Sisa, Narcisa; Teo, Teodoro (Theodore); Tiago, Santiago (James); Tasio, Anastasio; Tiká, Escolastica; Tinay, Quintina; Tinong, Saturnino.
Provincial: Head of a religious order in the Philippines.

querida: Paramour, mistress: from the Spanish, "beloved."

real: One-eighth of a peso, twenty cuartos.

sala: The principal room in the more pretentious Philippine houses.

salabat: An infusion of ginger.

salakot: Wide hat of palm or bamboo and rattan, distinctively Filipino.

sampaguita: The Arabian jasmine: a small, white, very fragrant flower, extensively cultivated, and worn in chaplets and rosaries by the women and girls—the typical Philippine flower.

santol: The Philippine sandal-tree.

sawali: Plaited bamboo wattle.

sinamay: A transparent cloth woven from abaka fibers.

sinigang: Water with vegetables or some acid fruit, in which fish are boiled; "fish soup."

Susmariosep: A common exclamation: contraction of the Spanish, **Jesús, María, y José**, the Holy Family.

tabí: The cry of carriage drivers to warn pedestrians.

talibon: A short sword, the "war bolo."

tapa: Jerked meat.

tápis: A piece of dark cloth or lace, often richly worked or embroidered, worn at the waist somewhat in the fashion of an apron: a distinctive portion of the native women's attire, especially among the Tagalogs.

tarambulo: A low weed whose leaves and fruit pedicles are covered with short, sharp spines.

teniente-mayor: Senior lieutenant, the senior member of the town council and substitute for the gobernadorcillo.

tikas-tikas: A variety of canna bearing bright red flowers.

tertiary brethren: Members of a lay society affiliated with a regular monastic order, especially the Venerable Tertiary Order of the Franciscans.

timbaín: The "water-cure," and hence, any kind of torture. The primary meaning is "to draw water from a well," from **timba**, pail.

tikbalang: An evil spirit, capable of assuming various forms, but said to appear usually in the shape of a tall black man with disproportionately long legs: the "bogey man" of Tagalog children.

tulisan: Outlaw, bandit. Under the old régime in the Philippines the tulisanes were those who, on account of real or fancied grievances against the authorities, or from fear of punishment for crime, or from an instinctive desire to return to primitive simplicity, foreswore life in the towns "under the bell," and made their homes in the mountains or other remote places. Gathered in small bands with such arms as they could secure, they sustained themselves by highway robbery and the levying of blackmail from the country folk.

zacate: Native grass used for feeding livestock.

THE PHILIPPINES A CENTURY HENCE

A plant I am, that scarcely grown,
Was torn from out its Eastern bed,
Where all around perfume is shed,
And life but as a dream is known;
The land that I can call my own,
By me forgotten ne'er to be,
Where trilling birds their song taught me,
And cascades with their ceaseless roar,
And all along the spreading shore
The murmurs of the sounding sea.
While yet in childhood's happy day,
I learned upon its sun to smile,
And in my breast there seemed the while
Seething volcanic fires to play;
A bard I was, and my wish alway
To call upon the fleeting wind,
With all the force of verse and mind:
"Go forth, and spread around its fame,
From zone to zone with glad acclaim,
And earth to heaven together bind!"

From “Mi Piden Versos” (1882),
verses from Madrid for his mother.

[Contents]

The Philippines
A Century Hence

[Contents]

“In the Philippine Islands the American government has tried, and is trying, to carry out exactly what the greatest genius and most revered patriot ever known in the Philippines, José Rizal, steadfastly advocated.”

—From a public address at Fargo, N.D., on April 7th. 1903, *by the President of the United States.*

[Contents]

A sketch map, by Dr. Rizal, of spheres of influence in the Pacific at the time of writing “The Philippines A Century Hence,” as they appeared to him.

Most of the French names will be easily recognized, though it may be noted that “Etats Unis” is our own United States, “L’Angleterre” England, and “L’Espagne” Spain.

[Contents]

Noli Me Tangere Quarter-Centennial Series
Edited by Austin Craig

The Philippines
A Century Hence

By **José Rizal**

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[Contents]

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Registered in the Philippine Islands.[9]
[Contents]

Introduction

As “Filipinas dentro de Cien Años”, this article was originally published serially in the Filipino fortnightly review “La Solidaridad”, of Madrid, running through the issues from September, 1889, to January, 1890.

It supplements Rizal’s great novel “Noli Me Tangere” and its sequel “El Filibusterismo”, and the translation here given is fortunately by Mr. Charles Derbyshire who in his “The Social Cancer” and “The Reign of Greed” has so happily rendered into English those masterpieces of Rizal.

The reference which Doctor Rizal makes to President Harrison had in mind the grandson-of-his-grandfather’s blundering, wavering policy that, because of a groundless fear of infringing the natives’ natural rights, put his country in [10]the false light of wanting to share in Samoa’s exploitation, taking the leonine portion, too, along with Germany and England.
Robert Louis Stevenson has told the story of the unhappy condition created by that disastrous international agreement which was achieved by the dissembling diplomats of greedy Europe flattering unsophisticated America into believing that two monarchies preponderating in an alliance with a republic would be fairer than the republic acting unhampered.

In its day the scheme was acclaimed by irrational idealists as a triumph of American abnegation and an example of modern altruism. It resulted that “the international agreement” became a constant cause of international disagreements, as any student of history could have foretold, until, disgusted and disillusioned, the United States tardily recalled Washington’s warning against entanglements with foreign powers and became a party to a real partition, [11]but this time playing the lamb’s part. England was compensated with concessions in other parts of the world, the United States was “given” what it already held under a cession twenty-seven years old,—and Germany took the rest as her emperor had planned from the start.
There is this Philippine bearing to the incident that the same stripe of unpractical philanthropists, not discouraged at having forced the Samoans under the ungentle German rule—for their victims and not themselves suffer by their mistakes, are seeking now the neutralization by international agreement of the Archipelago for which Rizal gave his life. Their success would mean another “entangling alliance” for the United States, with six

allies, or nine including Holland, China and Spain, if the "great republic" should be allowed by the diplomats of the "Great Powers" to invite these nonentities in world politics, with whom she would still be outvoted.[12]
Rizal's reference to America as a possible factor in the Philippines' future is based upon the prediction of the German traveller Feodor Jagor, who about 1860 spent a number of months in the Islands and later published his observations, supplemented by ten years of further study in European libraries and museums, as "Travels in the Philippines", to use the title of the English translation,—a very poor one, by the way. Rizal read the much better Spanish version while a student in the Ateneo de Manila, from a copy supplied by Paciano Rizal Mercado who directed his younger brother's political education and transferred to José the hopes which had been blighted for himself by the execution of his beloved teacher, Father Burgos, in the Cavite alleged insurrection.

Jagor's prophecy furnishes the explanation to Rizal's public life. His policy of preparing his countrymen for industrial and commercial [13]competition seems to have had its inspiration in this reading done when he was a youth in years but mature in fact through close contact with tragic public events as well as with sensational private sorrows.
When in Berlin, Doctor Rizal met Professor Jagor, and the distinguished geographer and his youthful but brilliant admirer became fast friends, often discussing how the progress of events was bringing true the fortune for the Philippines which the knowledge of its history and the acquaintance with its then condition had enabled the trained observer to foretell with that same certainty that the meteorologist foretells the morrow's weather.

A like political acumen Rizal tried to develop in his countrymen. He republished Morga's History (first published in Mexico in 1609) to recall their past. Noli Me Tangere painted their present, and in El Filibusterismo was sketched the future which continuance upon[14]their then course must bring. "The Philippines A Century Hence" suggests other possibilities, and seems to have been the initial issue in the series of ten which Rizal planned to print, one a year, to correct the misunderstanding of his previous writings which had come from their being known mainly by the extracts cited in the censors' criticism.
José Rizal in life voiced the aspirations of his countrymen and as the different elements in his divided native land recognized that these were the

essentials upon which all were agreed and that their points of difference among themselves were not vital, dissension disappeared and there came an united Philippines. Now, since his death, the fact that both continental and insular Americans look to him as their hero makes possible the hope that misunderstandings based on differences as to details may cease when Filipinos recognize that the American Government in the Philippines, properly approached, is willing [15]to grant all that Rizal considered important, and when Americans understand that the people of the Philippines, unaccustomed to the frank discussions of democracy, would be content with so little even as Rizal asked of Spain if only there were some salve for their unwittingly wounded *amor propio*.

A better knowledge of the writings of José Rizal may accomplish this desirable consummation.[16]

"I do not write for this generation. I am writing for other ages. If this could read me, they would burn my books, the work of my whole life. On the other hand, the generation which interprets these writings will be an educated generation; they will understand me and say: 'Not all were asleep in the night-time of our grandparents'."

—*The Philosopher Tasio, in Noli Me Tangere.*

Jagor's Prophecy

The Prophecy Which Prompted Rizal's Policy of Preparation For the Philippines

This extract is translated from Pages 287–289 of "Reisen in den Philippinen von F. Jagor: Berlin 1873".

"The old situation is no longer possible of maintenance, with the changed conditions of the present time.

"The colony can no longer be kept secluded from the world. Every facility afforded for commercial intercourse is a blow to the old system, and a great step made in the direction of broad and liberal reforms. The more foreign capital and foreign ideas and customs are introduced, increasing the prosperity, enlightenment, and self respect of the population, the more impatiently will the existing evils be endured.

"England can and does open her possessions unconcernedly to the world. The British colonies are united to the mother country by the[20]bond of mutual advantage, viz., the production of raw material by means of English capital, and the exchange of the same for English manufactures. The wealth of England is so great, the organization of her commerce with the world so complete, that nearly all the foreigners even in the British possessions are for the most part agents for English business houses, which would scarcely be affected, at least to any marked extent, by a political dismemberment. It is entirely different with Spain, which possesses the colony as an inherited property, and without the power of turning it to any useful account.

"Government monopolies rigorously maintained, insolent disregard and neglect of the half-castes and powerful creoles, and the example of the United States, were the chief reasons of the downfall of the American possessions. The same causes threaten ruin to the Philippines; but of the monopolies I have said enough.[21]

"Half-castes and creoles, it is true, are not, as they formerly were in America, excluded from all official appointments; but they feel deeply hurt and injured through the crowds of place-hunters which the frequent changes of Ministers send to Manila.

"Also the influence of American elements is at least discernible on the horizon, and will come more to the front as the relations of the two

countries grow closer. At present these are still of little importance; in the meantime commerce follows its old routes, which lead to England and the Atlantic ports of the Union. Nevertheless, he who attempts to form a judgment as to the future destiny of the Philippines cannot fix his gaze only on their relations to Spain; he must also consider the mighty changes which within a few decades are being effected on that side of our planet. For the first time in the world's history, the gigantic nations on both sides of a gigantic ocean are beginning to [22]come into direct intercourse: Russia, which alone is greater than two divisions of the world together; China, which within her narrow bounds contains a third of the human race; *America*, with cultivable soil enough to support almost three times the entire population of the earth. Russia's future rôle in the Pacific Ocean at present baffles all calculations. The intercourse of the two other powers will probably have all the more important consequences when the adjustment between the immeasurable necessity for human labor-power on the one hand, and a correspondingly great surplus of that power on the other, shall fall on it as a problem."

"The world of the ancients was confined to the shores of the Mediterranean; and the Atlantic and Indian Oceans sufficed at one time for our traffic. When first the shores of the Pacific re-echoed with the sounds of active commerce, the trade of the world and the history of the world may be really said to have [23]begun. A start in that direction has been made; whereas not so very long ago the immense ocean was one wide waste of waters, traversed from both points only once a year. From 1603 to 1769 scarcely a ship had ever visited California, that wonderful country which, twenty-five years ago, with the exception of a few places on the coast, was an unknown wilderness, but which is now covered with flourishing and prosperous towns and cities, divided from sea to sea by a railway, and its capital already ranking among the world's greatest seaports.

"But in proportion as the commerce of the western coast of America extends the influence of the American elements over the South Sea, the ensnaring spell which the great republic exercises over the Spanish colonies will not fail to assert itself in the Philippines also. The Americans appear to be called upon to bring the germ planted by the Spaniards to its full development. As conquerors of the New World, [24]representatives of the body of free citizens in contradistinction to the nobility, they follow with the axe and plow of the pioneer where the Spaniards had opened the way

with cross and sword. A considerable part of Spanish America already belongs to the United States, and has, since that occurred, attained an importance which could not have been anticipated either during Spanish rule or during the anarchy which ensued after and from it. In the long run, the Spanish system cannot prevail over the American. While the former exhausts the colonies through direct appropriation of them to the privileged classes, and the metropolis through the drain of its best forces (with, besides, a feeble population), America draws to itself the most energetic element from all lands; and these on her soil, free from all trammels, and restlessly pushing forward, are continually extending further her power and influence. The Philippines will so much the less escape the influence of the [25]two great neighboring empires, since neither the islands nor their metropolis are in a condition of stable equilibrium. It seems desirable for the natives that the opinions here expressed shall not too soon be realized as facts, for their training thus far has not sufficiently prepared them for success in the contest with those restless, active, most inconsiderate peoples; they have dreamed away their youth."[31]

[Contents]

The Philippines A Century Hence

[Contents]

I.

Following our usual custom of facing squarely the most difficult and delicate questions relating to the Philippines, without weighing the consequences that our frankness may bring upon us, we shall in the present article treat of their future.

In order to read the destiny of a people, it is necessary to open the book of its past, and this, for the Philippines, may be reduced in general terms to what follows.

Scarcely had they been attached to the Spanish crown than they had to sustain with their blood and the efforts of their sons the wars and ambitions of conquest of the Spanish people, and in these struggles, in that terrible [32]crisis when a people changes its form of government, its laws, usages, customs, religion and beliefs the Philippines were depopulated, impoverished and retarded—caught in their metamorphosis, without confidence in their past, without faith in their present and with no fond hope for the years to come. The former rulers who had merely endeavored to secure the fear and submission of their subjects, habituated by them to servitude, fell like leaves from a dead tree, and the people, who had no love for them nor knew what liberty was, easily changed masters, perhaps hoping to gain something by the innovation.

Then began a new era for the Filipinos. They gradually lost their ancient traditions, their recollections—they forgot their writings, their songs, their poetry, their laws, in order to learn by heart other doctrines, which they did not understand, other ethics, other tastes, different from those inspired in their race by their [33]climate and their way of thinking. Then there was a falling-off, they were lowered in their own eyes, they became ashamed of what was distinctively their own, in order to admire and praise what was foreign and incomprehensible: their spirit was broken and they acquiesced.

Thus years and centuries rolled on. Religious shows, rites that caught the eye, songs, lights, images arrayed with gold, worship in a strange language, legends, miracles and sermons, hypnotized the already naturally superstitious spirit of the country, but did not succeed in destroying it

altogether, in spite of the whole system afterwards developed and operated with unyielding tenacity.

When the ethical abasement of the inhabitants had reached this stage, when they had become disheartened and disgusted with themselves, an effort was made to add the final stroke for reducing so many dormant wills and intellects to nothingness, in order to make of the individual [34]a sort of toiler, a brute, a beast of burden, and to develop a race without mind or heart. Then the end sought was revealed, it was taken for granted, the race was insulted, an effort was made to deny it every virtue, every human characteristic, and there were even writers and priests who pushed the movement still further by trying to deny to the natives of the country not only capacity for virtue but also even the tendency to vice.
Then this which they had thought would be death was sure salvation. Some dying persons are restored to health by a heroic remedy.

So great endurance reached its climax with the insults, and the lethargic spirit woke to life. His sensitiveness, the chief trait of the native, was touched, and while he had had the forbearance to suffer and die under a foreign flag, he had it not when they whom he served repaid his sacrifices with insults and jests. Then he began to study himself and to realize his misfortune. [35]Those who had not expected this result, like all despotic masters, regarded as a wrong every complaint, every protest, and punished it with death, endeavoring thus to stifle every cry of sorrow with blood, and they made mistake after mistake.
The spirit of the people was not thereby cowed, and even though it had been awakened in only a few hearts, its flame nevertheless was surely and consumingly propagated, thanks to abuses and the stupid endeavors of certain classes to stifle noble and generous sentiments. Thus when a flame catches a garment, fear and confusion propagate it more and more, and each shake, each blow, is a blast from the bellows to fan it into life.

Undoubtedly during all this time there were not lacking generous and noble spirits among the dominant race that tried to struggle for the rights of humanity and justice, or sordid and cowardly ones among the dominated that aided [36]the debasement of their own country. But both were exceptions and we are speaking in general terms.

Such is an outline of their past. We know their present. Now, what will their future be?

Will the Philippine Islands continue to be a Spanish colony, and if so, what kind of colony? Will they become a province of Spain, with or without autonomy? And to reach this stage, what kind of sacrifices will have to be made?

Will they be separated from the mother country to live independently, to fall into the hands of other nations, or to ally themselves with neighboring powers?

It is impossible to reply to these questions, for to all of them both *yes* and *no* may be answered, according to the time desired to be covered. When there is in nature no fixed condition, how much less must there be in the life of a people, beings endowed with mobility and movement! So it is that in order to deal [37]with these questions, it is necessary to presume an unlimited period of time, and in accordance therewith try to forecast future events.[41]
[Contents]

II.

What will become of the Philippines within a century? Will they continue to be a Spanish colony?

Had this question been asked three centuries ago, when at Legazpi's death the Malayan Filipinos began to be gradually undeceived and, finding the yoke heavy, tried in vain to shake it off, without any doubt whatsoever the reply would have been easy. To a spirit enthusiastic over the liberty of the country, to those unconquerable Kagayanes who nourished within themselves the spirit of the Magalats, to the descendants of the heroic Gat Pulintang and Gat Salakab of the Province of Batangas, independence was assured, it was merely a question [42]of getting together and making a determined effort. But for him who, disillusioned by sad experience, saw everywhere discord and disorder, apathy and brutalization in the lower classes, discouragement and disunion in the upper, only one answer presented itself, and it was: extend his hands to the chains, bow his neck beneath the yoke and accept the future with the resignation of an invalid who watches the leaves fall and foresees a long winter amid whose snows

he discerns the outlines of his grave. At that time discord justified pessimism—but three centuries passed, the neck had become accustomed to the yoke, and each new generation, begotten in chains, was constantly better adapted to the new order of things.

Now, then, are the Philippines in the same condition they were three centuries ago?

For the liberal Spaniards the ethical condition of the people remains the same, that is, the native Filipinos have not advanced; for the[43]friars and their followers the people have been redeemed from savagery, that is, they have progressed; for many Filipinos ethics, spirit and customs have decayed, as decay all the good qualities of a people that falls into slavery that is, they have retrograded.

Laying aside these considerations, so as not to get away from our subject, let us draw a brief parallel between the political situation then and the situation at present, in order to see if what was not possible at that time can be so now, or *vice versa*.

Let us pass over the loyalty the Filipinos may feel for Spain; let us suppose for a moment, along with Spanish writers, that there exist only motives for hatred and jealousy between the two races; let us admit the assertions flaunted by many that three centuries of domination have not awakened in the sensitive heart of the native a single spark of affection or gratitude; and we may see whether or not [44]the Spanish cause has gained ground in the Islands.

Formerly the Spanish authority was upheld among the natives by a handful of soldiers, three to five hundred at most, many of whom were engaged in trade and were scattered about not only in the Islands but also among the neighboring nations, occupied in long wars against the Mohammedans in the south, against the British and Dutch, and ceaselessly harassed by Japanese, Chinese, or some tribe in the interior. Then communication with Mexico and Spain was slow, rare and difficult; frequent and violent the disturbances among the ruling powers in the Islands, the treasury nearly always empty, and the life of the colonists dependent upon one frail ship that handled the Chinese trade. Then the seas in those regions were infested with pirates, all enemies of the Spanish name, which was defended by an improvised fleet, generally manned by rude adventurers, when not by foreigners and enemies, [45]as happened in the expedition of Gómez Pérez

Dasmariñas, which was checked and frustrated by the mutiny of the Chinese rowers, who killed him and thwarted all his plans and schemes. Yet in spite of so many adverse circumstances the Spanish authority has been upheld for more than three centuries and, though it has been curtailed, still continues to rule the destinies of the Philippine group.

On the other hand, the present situation seems to be gilded and rosy—as we might say, a beautiful morning compared to the vexed and stormy night of the past. The material forces at the disposal of the Spanish sovereign have now been trebled; the fleet relatively improved; there is more organization in both civil and military affairs; communication with the sovereign country is swifter and surer; she has no enemies abroad; her possession is assured; and the country dominated seems to have less spirit, less aspiration for independence, a word that is to it almost incomprehensible. Everything then at first [46]glance presages another three centuries, at least, of peaceful domination and tranquil suzerainty.

But above the material considerations are arising others, invisible, of an ethical nature, far more powerful and transcendental.

Orientals, and the Malays in particular, are a sensitive people: delicacy of sentiment is predominant with them. Even now, in spite of contact with the occidental nations, who have ideals different from his, we see the Malayan Filipino sacrifice everything—liberty, ease, welfare, name, for the sake of an aspiration or a conceit, sometimes scientific, or of some other nature, but at the least word which wounds his self-love he forgets all his sacrifices, the labor expended, to treasure in his memory and never forget the slight he thinks he has received.

So the Philippine peoples have remained faithful during three centuries, giving up their liberty and their independence, sometimes dazzled by [47]the hope of the Paradise promised, sometimes cajoled by the friendship offered them by a noble and generous people like the Spanish, sometimes also compelled by superiority of arms of which they were ignorant and which timid spirits invested with a mysterious character, or sometimes because the invading foreigner took advantage of intestine feuds to step in as the peacemaker in discord and thus later to dominate both parties and subject them to his authority.

Spanish domination once established, it was firmly maintained, thanks to the attachment of the people, to their mutual dissensions, and to the fact that

the sensitive self-love of the native had not yet been wounded. Then the people saw their own countrymen in the higher ranks of the army, their general officers fighting beside the heroes of Spain and sharing their laurels, begrudged neither character, reputation nor consideration; then fidelity and attachment to Spain, love of the fatherland, made of the [48]native,*encomendero*1 and even general, as during the English invasion; then there had not yet been invented the insulting and ridiculous epithets with which recently the most laborious and painful achievements of the native leaders have been stigmatized; not then had it become the fashion to insult and slander in stereotyped phrase, in newspapers and books published with governmental and superior ecclesiastical approval, the people that paid, fought and poured out its blood for the Spanish name, nor was it considered either noble or witty to offend a whole race, which was forbidden to reply or defend itself; and if there were religious hypochondriacs who in the leisure of their cloisters dared to write against it, as did the Augustinian [49]Gaspar de San Agustin and the Jesuit Velarde, their loathsome abortions never saw the light, and still less were they themselves rewarded with miters and raised to high offices. True it is that neither were the natives of that time such as we are now: three centuries of brutalization and obscurantism have necessarily had some influence upon us, the most beautiful work of divinity in the hands of certain artisans may finally be converted into a caricature.

The priests of that epoch, wishing to establish their domination over the people, got in touch with it and made common cause with it against the oppressive *encomenderos*. Naturally, the people saw in them greater learning and some prestige and placed its confidence in them, followed their advice, and listened to them even in the darkest hours. If they wrote, they did so in defense of the rights of the native and made his cry reach even to the distant steps of the Throne. And not a few priests, both secular [50]and regular, undertook dangerous journeys, as representatives of the country, and this, along with the strict and public *residencia*2 then required of the governing powers, from the captain-general to the most insignificant official, rather consoled and pacified the wounded spirits, satisfying, even though it were only in form, all the malcontents.

All this has passed away. The derisive laughter penetrates like mortal poison into the heart of the native who pays and suffers and it becomes more offensive the more immunity it enjoys. A common sore, the general

affront offered to a whole race, has wiped away the old feuds among different provinces. The people no longer has confidence in its former protectors, [51]now its exploiters and executioners. The masks have fallen. It has seen that the love and piety of the past have come to resemble the devotion of a nurse who, unable to live elsewhere, desires eternal infancy, eternal weakness, for the child in order to go on drawing her wages and existing at its expense; it has seen not only that she does not nourish it to make it grow but that she poisons it to stunt its growth, and at the slightest protest she flies into a rage! The ancient show of justice, the holy *residencia*, has disappeared; confusion of ideas begins to prevail; the regard shown for a governor-general, like La Torre, becomes a crime in the government of his successor, sufficient to cause the citizen to lose his liberty and his home; if he obey the order of one official, as in the recent matter of admitting corpses into the church, it is enough to have the obedient subject later harassed and persecuted in every possible way; obligations and taxes increase without thereby increasing rights, privileges [52]and liberties or assuring the few in existence; a régime of continual terror and uncertainty disturbs the minds, a régime worse than a period of disorder, for the fears that the imagination conjures up are generally greater than the reality; the country is poor; the financial crisis through which it is passing is acute, and every one points out with the finger the persons who are causing the trouble, yet no one dares lay hands upon them!

True it is that the Penal Code has come like a drop of balm to such bitterness.3 But of what use are all the codes in the world, if by means of confidential reports, if for trifling reasons, if through anonymous traitors any honest citizen may be exiled or banished without a hearing, without a trial? Of what use is that Penal Code, of what use is life, if there is no security in the home, no faith in justice and confidence [53]in tranquility of conscience? Of what use is all that array of terms, all that collection of articles, when the cowardly accusation of a traitor has more influence in the timorous ears of the supreme autocrat than all the cries for justice?

If this state of affairs should continue, what will become of the Philippines within a century?

The batteries are gradually becoming charged and if the prudence of the government does not provide an outlet for the currents that are

accumulating, some day the spark will be generated. This is not the place to speak of what outcome such a deplorable conflict might have, for it depends upon chance, upon the weapons and upon a thousand circumstances which man can not foresee. But even though all the advantage should be on the government's side and therefore the probability of success, it would be a Pyrrhic victory, and no government ought to desire such.[54]

If those who guide the destinies of the Philippines remain obstinate, and instead of introducing reforms try to make the condition of the country retrograde, to push their severity and repression to extremes against the classes that suffer and think, they are going to force the latter to venture and put into play the wretchedness of an unquiet life, filled with privation and bitterness, against the hope of securing something indefinite. What would be lost in the struggle? Almost nothing: the life of the numerous discontented classes has no such great attraction that it should be preferred to a glorious death. It may indeed be a suicidal attempt—but then, what? Would not a bloody chasm yawn between victors and vanquished, and might not the latter with time and experience become equal in strength, since they are superior in numbers, to their dominators? Who disputes this? All the petty insurrections that have occurred in the Philippines were the [55]work of a few fanatics or discontented soldiers, who had to deceive and humbug the people or avail themselves of their power over their subordinates to gain their ends. So they all failed. No insurrection had a popular character or was based on a need of the whole race or fought for human rights or justice, so it left no ineffaceable impressions, but rather when they saw that they had been duped the people bound up their wounds and applauded the overthrow of the disturbers of their peace! But what if the movement springs from the people themselves and bases its cause upon their woes?

So then, if the prudence and wise reforms of our ministers do not find capable and determined interpreters among the colonial governors and faithful perpetuators among those whom the frequent political changes send to fill such a delicate post; if met with the eternal *it is out of order*, proffered by the elements who see their livelihood in the backwardness of their subjects; [56]if just claims are to go unheeded, as being of a subversive tendency; if the country is denied representation in the Cortes and an authorized voice to cry out against all kinds of abuses, which escape through the complexity of the laws; if, in short, the system, prolific in

results of alienating the good will of the natives, is to continue, pricking his *apathetic* mind with insults and charges of ingratitude, we can assert that in a few years the present state of affairs will have been modified completely—and inevitably. There now exists a factor which was formerly lacking—the spirit of the nation has been aroused, and a common misfortune, a common debasement, has united all the inhabitants of the Islands. A numerous enlightened class now exists within and without the Islands, a class created and continually augmented by the stupidity of certain governing powers, which forces the inhabitants to leave the country, to secure education abroad, and it is [57]maintained and struggles thanks to the provocations and the system of espionage in vogue. This class, whose number is cumulatively increasing, is in constant communication with the rest of the Islands, and if today it constitutes only the brain of the country in a few years it will form the whole nervous system and manifest its existence in all its acts.

Now, statecraft has various means at its disposal for checking a people on the road to progress: the brutalization of the masses through a caste addicted to the government, aristocratic, as in the Dutch colonies, or theocratic, as in the Philippines; the impoverishment of the country; the gradual extermination of the inhabitants; and the fostering of feuds among the races.

Brutalization of the Malayan Filipino has been demonstrated to be impossible. In spite of the dark horde of friars, in whose hands rests the instruction of youth, which miserably wastes years and years in the *colleges*, issuing therefrom [58]tired, weary and disgusted with books; in spite of the censorship, which tries to close every avenue to progress; in spite of all the pulpits, confessionals, books and missals that inculcate hatred toward not only all scientific knowledge but even toward the Spanish language itself; in spite of this whole elaborate system perfected and tenaciously operated by those who wish to keep the Islands in holy ignorance, there exist writers, freethinkers, historians, philosophers, chemists, physicians, artists and jurists. Enlightenment is spreading and the persecution it suffers quickens it. No, the divine flame of thought is inextinguishable in the Filipino people and somehow or other it will shine forth and compel recognition. It is impossible to brutalize the inhabitants of the Philippines!

May poverty arrest their development?

Perhaps, but it is a very dangerous means. Experience has everywhere shown us and especially in the Philippines, that the classes which [59]are better off have always been addicted to peace and order, because they live comparatively better and may be the losers in civil disturbances. Wealth brings with it refinement, the spirit of conservation, while poverty inspires adventurous ideas, the desire to change things, and has little care for life. Machiavelli himself held this means of subjecting a people to be perilous, observing that loss of welfare stirs up more obdurate enemies than loss of life. Moreover, when there are wealth and abundance, there is less discontent, less complaint, and the government, itself wealthier, has more means for sustaining itself. On the other hand, there occurs in a poor country what happens in a house where bread is wanting. And further, of what use to the mother country would a poor and lean colony be?
Neither is it possible gradually to exterminate the inhabitants. The Philippine races, like all the Malays, do not succumb before the foreigner, [60]like the Australians, the Polynesians and the Indians of the New World. In spite of the numerous wars the Filipinos have had to carry on, in spite of the epidemics that have periodically visited them, their number has trebled, as has that of the Malays of Java and the Moluccas. The Filipino embraces civilization and lives and thrives in every clime, in contact with every people. Rum, that poison which exterminated the natives of the Pacific islands, has no power in the Philippines, but, rather, comparison of their present condition with that described by the early historians, makes it appear that the Filipinos have grown soberer. The petty wars with the inhabitants of the South consume only the soldiers, people who by their fidelity to the Spanish flag, far from being a menace, are surely one of its solidest supports.
There remains the fostering of intestine feuds among the provinces.

This was formerly possible, when communication from one island to another was rare and [61]difficult, when there were no steamers or telegraph-lines, when the regiments were formed according to the various provinces, when some provinces were cajoled by awards of privileges and honors and others were protected from the strongest. But now that the privileges have disappeared, that through a spirit of distrust the regiments have been reorganized, that the inhabitants move from one island to another,

communication and exchange of impressions naturally increase, and as all see themselves threatened by the same peril and wounded in the same feelings, they clasp hands and make common cause. It is true that the union is not yet wholly perfected, but to this end tend the measures of good government, the vexations to which the townspeople are subjected, the frequent changes of officials, the scarcity of centers of learning, which forces the youth of all the Islands to come together and begin to get acquainted. The journeys to Europe contribute not a little to tighten the bonds, for abroad the inhabitants [62]of the most widely separated provinces are impressed by their patriotic feelings, from sailors even to the wealthiest merchants, and at the sight of modern liberty and the memory of the misfortunes of their country, they embrace and call one another brothers.
In short, then, the advancement and ethical progress of the Philippines are inevitable, are decreed by fate.

The Islands cannot remain in the condition they are without requiring from the sovereign country more liberty *Mutatis mutandis*. For new men, a new social order.

To wish that the alleged child remain in its swaddling-clothes is to risk that it may turn against its nurse and flee, tearing away the old rags that bind it.

The Philippines, then, will remain under Spanish domination, but with more law and greater liberty, or they will declare themselves[63]independent, after steeping themselves and the mother country in blood.
As no one should desire or hope for such an unfortunate rupture, which would be an evil for all and only the final argument in the most desperate predicament, let us see by what forms of peaceful evolution the Islands may remain subjected to the Spanish authority with the very least detriment to the rights, interests and dignity of both parties.[67]
[Contents]

III.

If the Philippines must remain under the control of Spain, they will necessarily have to be transformed in a political sense, for the course of their history and the needs of their inhabitants so require. This we demonstrated in the preceding article.

We also said that this transformation will be violent and fatal if it proceeds from the ranks of the people, but peaceful and fruitful if it emanate from the upper classes.

Some governors have realized this truth, and, impelled by their patriotism, have been trying to introduce needed reforms in order to forestall events. But notwithstanding all that have been ordered up to the present time, they have [68]produced scanty results, for the government as well as for the country. Even those that promised only a happy issue have at times caused injury, for the simple reason that they have been based upon unstable grounds.

We said, and once more we repeat, and will ever assert, that reforms which have a *palliative* character are not only ineffectual but even prejudicial, when the government is confronted with evils that must be cured *radically*. And were we not convinced of the honesty and rectitude of some governors, we would be tempted to say that all the partial reforms are only plasters and salves of a physician who, not knowing how to cure the cancer, and not daring to root it out, tries in this way to alleviate the patient's sufferings or to temporize with the cowardice of the timid and ignorant.

All the reforms of our liberal ministers were, have been, are, and will be good—when carried out.[69]

When we think of them, we are reminded of the dieting of Sancho Panza in his Barataria Island. He took his seat at a sumptuous and well-appointed table "covered with fruit and many varieties of food differently prepared," but between the wretch's mouth and each dish the physician Pedro Rezio interposed his wand, saying, "Take it away!" The dish removed, Sancho was as hungry as ever. True it is that the despotic Pedro Rezio gave reasons, which seem to have been written by Cervantes especially for the colonial administrations: "You must not eat, Mr. Governor, except according to the usage and custom of other islands where there are governors." Something was found to be wrong with each dish: one was too hot, another too moist, and so on, just like our Pedro Rezios on both sides of the sea. Great good did his cook's skill do Sancho![4]

In the case of our country, the reforms take [70]the place of the dishes, the Philippines are Sancho, while the part of the quack physician is played by

many persons, interested in not having the dishes touched, perhaps that they may themselves get the benefit of them.
The result is that the long-suffering Sancho, or the Philippines, misses his liberty, rejects all government and ends up by rebelling against his quack physician.

In like manner, so long as the Philippines have no liberty of the press, have no voice in the Cortes to make known to the government and to the nation whether or not their decrees have been duly obeyed, whether or not these benefit the country, all the able efforts of the colonial ministers will meet the fate of the dishes in Barataria island.

The minister, then, who wants his reforms to be reforms, must begin by declaring the press in the Philippines free and by instituting Filipino delegates.[71]
The press is free in the Philippines, because their complaints rarely ever reach the Peninsula, very rarely, and if they do they are so secret, so mysterious, that no newspaper dares to publish them, or if it does reproduce them, it does so tardily and badly.

A government that *rules a country from a great distance* is the one that has the most need for a free press, more so even than the government of the home country, if it wishes to rule rightly and fitly. The government that *governs in a country* may even dispense with the press (if it can), because it is on the ground, because it has eyes and ears, and because it directly observes what it rules and administers. But the government that *governs from afar* absolutely requires that the truth and the facts reach its knowledge by every possible channel, so that it may weigh and estimate them better, and this need increases when a country like the Philippines is concerned, where the inhabitants speak and [72]complain in a language unknown to the authorities. To govern in any other way may also be called governing, but it is to govern badly. It amounts to pronouncing judgment after hearing only one of the parties; it is steering a ship without reckoning its conditions, the state of the sea, the reefs and shoals, the direction of the winds and currents. It is managing a house by endeavoring merely to give it polish and a fine appearance without watching the money-chest, without looking after the servants and the members of the family.

But routine is a declivity down which many governments slide, and routine says that freedom of the press is dangerous. Let us see what History says: uprisings and revolutions have always occurred in countries tyrannized over, in countries where human thought and the human heart have been forced to remain silent.

If the great Napoleon had not tyrannized over the press, perhaps it would have warned [73]him of the peril into which he was hurled and have made him understand that the people were weary and the earth wanted peace. Perhaps his genius, instead of being dissipated in foreign aggrandizement, would have become intensive in laboring to strengthen his position and thus have assured it. Spain herself records in her history more revolutions when the press was gagged. What colonies have become independent while they have had a free press and enjoyed liberty? Is it preferable to govern blindly or to govern with ample knowledge?

Some one will answer that in colonies with a free press, the *prestige* of the rulers, that prop of false governments, will be greatly imperiled. We answer that the prestige of the nation is preferable to that of a few individuals. A nation acquires respect, not by abetting and concealing abuses, but by rebuking and punishing them. Moreover, to this prestige is applicable what Napoleon said about great men [74]and their valets. We, who endure and know all the false pretensions and petty persecutions of those sham gods, do not need a free press in order to recognize them; they have long ago lost their prestige. The free press is needed by the government, the government which still dreams of the prestige which it builds upon mined ground.

We say the same about the Filipino representatives.

What risks does the government see in them? One of three things: either that they will prove unruly, become political trimmers, or act properly.

Supposing that we should yield to the most absurd pessimism and admit the insult, great for the Philippines, but still greater for Spain, that all the representatives would be separatists and that in all their contentions they would advocate separatist ideas: does not a patriotic Spanish majority exist there, is there not present [75]there the vigilance of the governing powers to combat and oppose such intentions? And would not this be better than the discontent that ferments and expands in the secrecy of the home, in the huts and in the fields? Certainly the Spanish people does not spare its blood

where patriotism is concerned, but would not a struggle of principles in parliament be preferable to the exchange of shot in swampy lands, three thousand leagues from home, in impenetrable forests, under a burning sun or amid torrential rains? These pacific struggles of ideas, besides being a thermometer for the government, have the advantage of being cheap and glorious, because the Spanish parliament especially abounds in oratorical paladins, invincible in debate. Moreover, it is said that the Filipinos are indolent and peaceful—then what need the government fear? Hasn't it any influence in the elections? Frankly, it is a great compliment to the separatists to fear them in the midst of the Cortes of the nation.[76]

If they become political trimmers, as is to be expected and as they probably will be, so much the better for the government and so much the worse for their constituents. They would be a few more favorable votes, and the government could laugh openly at the separatists, if any there be.

If they become what they should be, worthy, honest and faithful to their trust, they will undoubtedly annoy an ignorant or incapable minister with their questions, but they will help him to govern and will be some more honorable figures among the representatives of the nation.

Now then, if the real objection to the Filipino delegates is that they smell like Igorots, which so disturbed in open Senate the doughty General Salamanca, then Don Sinibaldo de Mas, who saw the Igorots in person and wanted to live with them, can affirm that they will smell at worst like powder, and Señor Salamanca undoubtedly has no fear of that odor. And if [77]this were all, the Filipinos, who there in their own country are accustomed to bathe every day, when they become representatives may give up such a dirty custom, at least during the legislative session, so as not to offend the delicate nostrils of the Salamancas with the odor of the bath.

It is useless to answer certain objections of some fine writers regarding the rather brown skins and faces with somewhat wide nostrils. Questions of taste are peculiar to each race. China, for example, which has four hundred million inhabitants and a very ancient civilization, considers all Europeans ugly and calls them "fan-kwai," or red devils. Its taste has a hundred million more adherents than the European. Moreover, if this is the question, we would have to admit the inferiority of the Latins, especially the Spaniards, to the Saxons, who are much whiter.

And so long as it is not asserted that the Spanish parliament is an assemblage of Adonises, [78]Antinouses, pretty boys, and other like paragons; so long as the purpose of resorting thither is to legislate and not to philosophize or to wander through imaginary spheres, we maintain that the government ought not to pause at these objections. Law has no skin, nor reason nostrils.

So we see no serious reason why the Philippines may not have representatives. By their institution many malcontents would be silenced, and instead of blaming its troubles upon the government, as now happens, the country would bear them better, for it could at least complain and with its sons among its legislators would in a way become responsible for their actions.

We are not sure that we serve the true interests of our country by asking for representatives. We know that the lack of enlightenment, the indolence, the egotism of our fellow countrymen, and the boldness, the cunning and the powerful methods of those who wish their obscurantism, [79]may convert reform into a harmful instrument. But we wish to be loyal to the government and we are pointing out to it the road that appears best to us so that its efforts may not come to grief, so that discontent may disappear. If after so just, as well as necessary, a measure has been introduced, the Filipino people are so stupid and weak that they are treacherous to their own interests, then let the responsibility fall upon them, let them suffer all the consequences. Every country gets the fate it deserves, and the government can say that it has done its duty.

These are the two fundamental reforms, which, properly interpreted and applied, will dissipate all clouds, assure affection toward Spain, and make all succeeding reforms fruitful. These are the reforms *sine quibus non*.

It is puerile to fear that independence may come through them. The free press will keep the government in touch with public opinion,[80]and the representatives, if they are, as they ought to be, the best from among the sons of the Philippines, will be their hostages. With no cause for discontent, how then attempt to stir up the masses of the people?

Likewise inadmissible is the objection offered by some regarding the imperfect culture of the majority of the inhabitants. Aside from the fact that it is not so imperfect as is averred, there is no plausible reason why the ignorant and the defective (whether through their own or another’s fault)

should be denied representation to look after them and see that they are not abused. They are the very ones who most need it. No one ceases to be a man, no one forfeits his rights to civilization merely by being more or less uncultured, and since the Filipino is regarded as a fit citizen when he is asked to pay taxes or shed his blood to defend the fatherland, why must this fitness be denied him when the question arises of granting him [81]some right? Moreover, how is he to be held responsible for his ignorance, when it is acknowledged by all, friends and enemies, that his zeal for learning is so great that even before the coming of the Spaniards every one could read and write, and that we now see the humblest families make enormous sacrifices in order that their children may become a little enlightened, even to the extent of working as servants in order to learn Spanish? How can the country be expected to become enlightened under present conditions when we see all the decrees issued by the government in favor of education meet with Pedro Rezios who prevent execution thereof, because they have in their hands what they call education? If the Filipino, then, is sufficiently intelligent to pay taxes, he must also be able to choose and retain the one who looks after him and his interests, with the product whereof he serves the government of his nation. To reason otherwise is to reason stupidly.[82] When the laws and the acts of officials are kept under surveillance, the word justice may cease to be a colonial jest. The thing that makes the English most respected in their possessions is their strict and speedy justice, so that the inhabitants repose entire confidence in the judges. Justice is the foremost virtue of the civilizing races. It subdues the barbarous nations, while injustice arouses the weakest.

Offices and trusts should be awarded by competition, publishing the work and the judgment thereon, so that there may be stimulus and that discontent may not be bred. Then, if the native does not shake off his *indolence* he can not complain when he sees all the offices filled by *Castilas*.

We presume that it will not be the Spaniard who fears to enter into this contest, for thus will he be able to prove his superiority by the superiority of intelligence. Although this is not the custom in the sovereign country, it [83]should be practiced in the colonies, for the reason that genuine prestige should be sought by means of moral qualities, because the colonizers ought to be, or at least to seem, upright, honest and intelligent, just as a man simulates virtues when he deals with strangers. The offices and trusts so

earned will do away with arbitrary dismissal and develop employees and officials capable and cognizant of their duties. The offices held by natives, instead of endangering the Spanish domination, will merely serve to assure it, for what interest would they have in converting the sure and stable into the uncertain and problematical? The native is, moreover, very fond of peace and prefers an humble present to a brilliant future. Let the various Filipinos still holding office speak in this matter; they are the most unshaken conservatives.

We could add other minor reforms touching commerce, agriculture, security of the individual [84]and of property, education, and so on, but these are points with which we shall deal in other articles. For the present we are satisfied with the outlines, and no one can say that we ask too much.

There will not be lacking critics to accuse us of Utopianism: but what is Utopia? Utopia was a country imagined by Thomas Moore, wherein existed universal suffrage, religious toleration, almost complete abolition of the death penalty, and so on. When the book was published these things were looked upon as dreams, impossibilities, that is, Utopianism. Yet civilization has left the country of Utopia far behind, the human will and conscience have worked greater miracles, have abolished slavery and the death penalty for adultery—things impossible for even Utopia itself!

The French colonies have their representatives. The question has also been raised in the English parliament of giving representation [85]to the Crown colonies, for the others already enjoy some autonomy. The press there also is free. Only Spain, which in the sixteenth century was the model nation in civilization, lags far behind. Cuba and Porto Rico, whose inhabitants do not number a third of those of the Philippines, and who have not made such sacrifices for Spain, have numerous representatives. The Philippines in the early days had theirs, who conferred with the King and the Pope on the needs of the country. They had them in Spain's critical moments, when she groaned under the Napoleonic yoke, and they did not take advantage of the sovereign country's misfortune like other colonies, but tightened more firmly the bonds that united them to the nation, giving proofs of their loyalty; and they continued until many years later. What crime have the Islands committed that they are deprived of their rights?

To recapitulate: the Philippines will remain Spanish, if they enter upon the life of law and [86]civilization, if the rights of their inhabitants are respected,

if the other rights due them are granted, if the liberal policy of the government is carried out without trickery or meanness, without subterfuges or false interpretations.
Otherwise, if an attempt is made to see in the Islands a lode to be exploited, a resource to satisfy ambitions, thus to relieve the sovereign country of taxes, killing the goose that lays the golden eggs and shutting its ears to all cries of reason, then, however great may be the loyalty of the Filipinos, it will be impossible to hinder the operations of the inexorable laws of history. Colonies established to subserve the policy and the commerce of the sovereign country, all eventually become independent, said Bachelet, and before Bachelet all the Phœnecian, Carthaginian, Greek, Roman, English, Portuguese and Spanish colonies had said it.

Close indeed are the bonds that unite us to Spain. Two peoples do not live for three centuries [87]in continual contact, sharing the same lot, shedding their blood on the same fields, holding the same beliefs, worshipping the same God, interchanging the same ideas, but that ties are formed between them stronger than those fashioned by arms or fear. Mutual sacrifices and benefits have engendered affection. Machiavelli, the great reader of the human heart, said: *la natura degli huomini, é cosi obligarsi per li beneficii che essi fanno, come per quelli che essi ricevono* (it is human nature to be bound as much by benefits conferred as by those received). All this, and more, is true, but it is pure sentimentality, and in the arena of politics stern necessity and interests prevail. Howsoever much the Filipinos owe Spain, they can not be required to forego their redemption, to have their liberal and enlightened sons wander about in exile from their native land, the rudest aspirations stifled in its atmosphere, the peaceful inhabitant living in constant alarm, with the fortune [88]of the two peoples dependent upon the whim of one man. Spain can not claim, not even in the name of God himself, that six millions of people should be brutalized, exploited and oppressed, denied light and the rights inherent to a human being, and then heap upon them slights and insults. There is no claim of gratitude that can excuse, there is not enough powder in the world to justify, the offenses against the liberty of the individual, against the sanctity of the home, against the laws, against peace and honor, offenses that are committed there daily. There is no divinity that can proclaim the sacrifice of our dearest affections, the sacrifice of the family, the sacrileges and wrongs that are committed by

persons who have the name of God on their lips. No one can require an impossibility of the Filipino people. The noble Spanish people, so jealous of its rights and liberties, can not bid the Filipinos renounce theirs. A people that prides itself on the glories of its past can not ask [89]another, trained by it, to accept abjection and dishonor its own name!

We who today are struggling by the legal and peaceful means of debate so understand it, and with our gaze fixed upon our ideals, shall not cease to plead our cause, without going beyond the pale of the law, but if violence first silences us or we have the misfortune to fall (which is possible, for we are mortal), then we do not know what course will be taken by the numerous tendencies that will rush in to occupy the places that we leave vacant.

If what we desire is not realized....

In contemplating such an unfortunate eventuality, we must not turn away in horror, and so instead of closing our eyes we will face what the future may bring. For this purpose, after throwing the handful of dust due to Cerberus, let us frankly descend into the abyss and sound its terrible mysteries.[93]

[Contents]

IV.

History does not record in its annals any lasting domination exercised by one people over another, of different race, of diverse usages and customs, of opposite and divergent ideals.

One of the two had to yield and succumb. Either the foreigner was driven out, as happened in the case of the Carthaginians, the Moors and the French in Spain, or else these autochthons had to give way and perish, as was the case with the inhabitants of the New World, Australia and New Zealand.

One of the longest dominations was that of the Moors in Spain, which lasted seven centuries. But, even though the conquerors lived in the country conquered, even though the Peninsula [94]was broken up into small states, which gradually emerged like little islands in the midst of the great Saracen inundation, and in spite of the chivalrous spirit, the gallantry and the religious toleration of the califs, they were finally driven out after bloody and stubborn conflicts, which formed the Spanish nation and created the Spain of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

The existence of a foreign body within another endowed with strength and activity is contrary to all natural and ethical laws. Science teaches us that it is either assimilated, destroys the organism, is eliminated or becomes encysted.

Encystment of a conquering people is impossible, for it signifies complete isolation, absolute inertia, debility in the conquering element. Encystment thus means the tomb of the foreign invader.

Now, applying these considerations to the Philippines, we must conclude, as a deduction [95]from all we have said, that if their population be not assimilated to the Spanish nation, if the dominators do not enter into the spirit of their inhabitants, if equable laws and free and liberal reforms do not make each forget that they belong to different races, or if both peoples be not amalgamated to constitute one mass, socially and politically homogeneous, that is, not harassed by opposing tendencies and antagonistic ideas and interests, some day the Philippines will fatally and infallibly declare themselves independent. To this law of destiny can be opposed neither Spanish patriotism, nor the love of all the Filipinos for Spain, nor the doubtful future of dismemberment and intestine strife in the Islands themselves. Necessity is the most powerful divinity the world knows, and necessity is the resultant of physical forces set in operation by ethical forces.

We have said and statistics prove that it is impossible to exterminate the Filipino people. [96]And even were it possible, what interest would Spain have in the destruction of the inhabitants of a country she can not populate or cultivate, whose climate is to a certain extent disastrous to her? What good would the Philippines be without the Filipinos? Quite otherwise, under her colonial system and the transitory character of the Spaniards who go to the colonies, a colony is so much the more useful and productive to her as it possesses inhabitants and wealth. Moreover, in order to destroy the six million Malays, even supposing them to be in their infancy and that they have never learned to fight and defend themselves, Spain would have to sacrifice at least a fourth of her population. This we commend to the notice of the partizans of colonial exploitation.

But nothing of this kind can happen. The menace is that when the education and liberty necessary to human existence are denied by Spain to the Filipinos, then they will seek [97]enlightenment abroad, behind the mother

country's back, or they will secure by hook or by crook some advantages in their own country, with the result that the opposition of purblind and paretic politicians will not only be futile but even prejudicial, because it will convert motives for love and gratitude into resentment and hatred.

Hatred and resentment on one side, mistrust and anger on the other, will finally result in a violent and terrible collision, especially when there exist elements interested in having disturbances, so that they may get something in the excitement, demonstrate their mighty power, foster lamentations and recriminations, or employ violent measures. It is to be expected that the government will triumph and be generally (as is the custom) severe in punishment, either to teach a stern lesson in order to vaunt its strength or even to revenge upon the vanquished the spells of excitement and terror that [98]the danger caused it. An unavoidable concomitant of those catastrophes is the accumulation of acts of injustice committed against the innocent and peaceful inhabitants. Private reprisals, denunciations, despicable accusations, resentments, covetousness, the opportune moment for calumny, the haste and hurried procedure of the courts martial, the pretext of the integrity of the fatherland and the safety of the state, which cloaks and justifies everything, even for scrupulous minds, which unfortunately are still rare, and above all the panic-stricken timidity, the cowardice that battens upon the conquered—all these things augment the severe measures and the number of the victims. The result is that a chasm of blood is then opened between the two peoples, that the wounded and the afflicted, instead of becoming fewer, are increased, for to the families and friends of the guilty, who always think the punishment excessive and the judge unjust, must be added the [99]families and friends of the innocent, who see no advantage in living and working submissively and peacefully. Note, too, that if severe measures are dangerous in a nation made up of a homogeneous population, the peril is increased a hundred-fold when the government is formed of a race different from the governed. In the former an injustice may still be ascribed to one man alone, to a governor actuated by personal malice, and with the death of the tyrant the victim is reconciled to the government of his nation. But in a country dominated by a foreign race, even the justest act of severity is construed as injustice and oppression, because it is ordered by a foreigner, who is unsympathetic or is an enemy of the country, and the offense hurts not only the victim but his entire race, because it is not usually regarded as personal, and so the resentment

naturally spreads to the whole governing race and does not die out with the offender.[100]
Hence the great prudence and fine tact that should be exercised by colonizing countries, and the fact that government regards the colonies in general, and our colonial office in particular, as training schools, contributes notably to the fulfillment of the great law that the colonies sooner or later declare themselves independent.

Such is the descent down which the peoples are precipitated. In proportion as they are bathed in blood and drenched in tears and gall, the colony, if it has any vitality, learns how to struggle and perfect itself in fighting, while the mother country, whose colonial life depends upon peace and the submission of the subjects, is constantly weakened, and, even though she make heroic efforts, as her number is less and she has only a fictitious existence, she finally perishes. She is like the rich voluptuary accustomed to be waited upon by a crowd of servants toiling and planting for him, and who, on the day his slaves refuse him obedience, as he does not live by his own efforts, must die.[101]
Reprisals, wrongs and suspicions on one part and on the other the sentiment of patriotism and liberty, which is aroused in these incessant conflicts, insurrections and uprisings, operate to generalize the movement and one of the two peoples must succumb. The struggle will be brief, for it will amount to a slavery much more cruel than death for the people and to a dishonorable loss of prestige for the dominator. One of the peoples must succumb.

Spain, from the number of her inhabitants, from the condition of her army and navy, from the distance she is situated from the Islands, from her scanty knowledge of them, and from struggling against a people whose love and good will she has alienated, will necessarily have to give way, if she does not wish to risk not only her other possessions and her future in Africa, but also her very independence in Europe. All this at the cost of bloodshed and crime, after mortal conflicts, murders, conflagrations, [102]military executions, famine and misery.
The Spaniard is gallant and patriotic, and sacrifices everything, in favorable moments, for his country's good. He has the intrepidity of his bull. The Filipino loves his country no less, and although he is quieter, more peaceful, and with difficulty stirred up, when he is once aroused he does not hesitate

and for him the struggle means death to one or the other combatant. He has all the meekness and all the tenacity and ferocity of his carabao. Climate affects bipeds in the same way that it does quadrupeds.

The terrible lessons and the hard teachings that these conflicts will have afforded the Filipinos will operate to improve and strengthen their ethical nature. The Spain of the fifteenth century was not the Spain of the eighth. With their bitter experience, instead of intestine conflicts of some islands against others, as is generally feared, they will extend mutual support, [103]like shipwrecked persons when they reach an island after a fearful night of storm. Nor may it be said that we shall partake of the fate of the small American republics. They achieved their independence easily, and their inhabitants are animated by a different spirit from what the Filipinos are. Besides, the danger of falling again into other hands, English or German, for example, will force the Filipinos to be sensible and prudent. Absence of any great preponderance of one race over the others will free their imagination from all mad ambitions of domination, and as the tendency of countries that have been tyrannized over, when they once shake off the yoke, is to adopt the freest government, like a boy leaving school, like the beat of the pendulum, by a law of reaction the Islands will probably declare themselves a federal republic.

If the Philippines secure their independence after heroic and stubborn conflicts, they can [104]rest assured that neither England, nor Germany, nor France, and still less Holland, will dare to take up what Spain has been unable to hold. Within a few years Africa will completely absorb the attention of the Europeans, and there is no sensible nation which, in order to secure a group of poor and hostile islands, will neglect the immense territory offered by the Dark Continent, untouched, undeveloped and almost undefended. England has enough colonies in the Orient and is not going to risk losing her balance. She is not going to sacrifice her Indian Empire for the poor Philippine Islands—if she had entertained such an intention she would not have restored Manila in 1763, but would have kept some point in the Philippines, whence she might gradually expand. Moreover, what need has John Bull the trader to exhaust himself for the Philippines, when he is already lord of the Orient, when he has there Singapore, Hongkong and Shanghai? It is [105]probable that England will look favorably upon the independence of the Philippines, for it will open their ports to her and afford

greater freedom to her commerce. Furthermore, there exist in the United Kingdom tendencies and opinions to the effect that she already has too many colonies, that they are harmful, that they greatly weaken the sovereign country.
For the same reasons Germany will not care to run any risk, and because a scattering of her forces and a war in distant countries will endanger her existence on the continent. Thus we see her attitude, as much in the Pacific as in Africa, is confined to conquering easy territory that belongs to nobody. Germany avoids any foreign complications.

France has enough to do and sees more of a future in Tongking and China, besides the fact that the French spirit does not shine in zeal for colonization. France loves glory, but the glory and laurels that grow on the battlefields of [106]Europe. The echo from battlefields in the Far East hardly satisfies her craving for renown, for it reaches her quite faintly. She has also other obligations, both internally and on the continent.
Holland is sensible and will be content to keep the Moluccas and Java. Sumatra offers her a greater future than the Philippines, whose seas and coasts have a sinister omen for Dutch expeditions. Holland proceeds with great caution in Sumatra and Borneo, from fear of losing everything.

China will consider herself fortunate if she succeeds in keeping herself intact and is not dismembered or partitioned among the European powers that are colonizing the continent of Asia.

The same is true of Japan. On the north she has Russia, who envies and watches her; on the south England, with whom she is in accord even to her official language. She is, moreover, [107]under such diplomatic pressure from Europe that she can not think of outside affairs until she is freed from it, which will not be an easy matter. True it is that she has an excess of population, but Korea attracts her more than the Philippines and is, also, easier to seize.
Perhaps the great American Republic, whose interests lie in the Pacific and who has no hand in the spoliation of Africa, may some day dream of foreign possession. This is not impossible, for the example is contagious, covetousness and ambition are among the strongest vices, and Harrison manifested something of this sort in the Samoan question. But the Panama Canal is not opened nor the territory of the States congested with

inhabitants, and in case she should openly attempt it the European powers would not allow her to proceed, for they know very well that the appetite is sharpened by the first bites. North America would be quite a troublesome rival, if she should once get into [108]the business. Furthermore, this is contrary to her traditions.

Very likely the Philippines will defend with inexpressible valor the liberty secured at the price of so much blood and sacrifice. With the new men that will spring from their soil and with the recollection of their past, they will perhaps strive to enter freely upon the wide road of progress, and all will labor together to strengthen their fatherland, both internally and externally, with the same enthusiasm with which a youth falls again to tilling the land of his ancestors, so long wasted and abandoned through the neglect of those who have withheld it from him. Then the mines will be made to give up their gold for relieving distress, iron for weapons, copper, lead and coal. Perhaps the country will revive the maritime and mercantile life for which the islanders are fitted by their nature, ability and instincts, and once more free, like the bird that leaves its cage, [109]like the flower that unfolds to the air, will recover the pristine virtues that are gradually dying out and will again become addicted to peace—cheerful, happy, joyous, hospitable and daring.

These and many other things may come to pass within something like a hundred years. But the most logical prognostication, the prophecy based on the best probabilities, may err through remote and insignificant causes. An octopus that seized Mark Antony's ship altered the face of the world; a cross on Cavalry and a just man nailed thereon changed the ethics of half the human race, and yet before Christ, how many just men wrongfully perished and how many crosses were raised on that hill! The death of the just sanctified his work and made his teaching unanswerable. A sunken road at the battle of Waterloo buried all the glories of two brilliant decades, the whole Napoleonic world, and freed Europe. Upon what chance [110]accidents will the destiny of the Philippines depend?

Nevertheless, it is not well to trust to accident, for there is sometimes an imperceptible and incomprehensible logic in the workings of history. Fortunately, peoples as well as governments are subject to it.

Therefore, we repeat, and we will ever repeat, while there is time, that it is better to keep pace with the desires of a people than to give way before

them: the former begets sympathy and love, the latter contempt and anger. Since it is necessary to grant six million Filipinos their rights, so that they may be in fact Spaniards, let the government grant these rights freely and spontaneously, without damaging reservations, without irritating mistrust. We shall never tire of repeating this while a ray of hope is left us, for we prefer this unpleasant task to the need of some day saying to the mother country: "Spain, we have spent our [111]youth in serving thy interests in the interests of our country; we have looked to thee, we have expended the whole light of our intellects, all the fervor and enthusiasm of our hearts in working for the good of what was thine, to draw from thee a glance of love, a liberal policy that would assure us the peace of our native land and thy sway over loyal but unfortunate islands! Spain, thou hast remained deaf, and, wrapped up in thy pride, hast pursued thy fatal course and accused us of being traitors, merely because we love our country, because we tell thee the truth and hate all kinds of injustice. What dost thou wish us to tell our wretched country, when it asks about the result of our efforts? Must we say to it that, since for it we have lost everything—youth, future, hope, peace, family; since in its service we have exhausted all the resources of hope, all the disillusions of desire, it also takes the residue which we can not use, the blood from our veins and [112]the strength left in our arms? Spain, must we some day tell Filipinas that thou hast no ear for her woes and that if she wishes to be saved she must redeem herself?"[115]

1An *encomendero* was a Spanish soldier who as a reward for faithful service was set over a district with power to collect tribute and the duty of providing the people with legal protection and religious instruction. This arrangement is memorable in early Philippine annals chiefly for the flagrant abuses that appear to have characterized it.

2No official was allowed to leave the Islands at the expiration of his term of office until his successor or a council appointed by the sovereign inquired into all the acts of his administration and approved them. (This residencia was a fertile source of recrimination and retaliation, so the author quite aptly refers to it a little further on as "the ancient *show* of justice."

3The penal code was promulgated in the Islands by Royal Order of September 4, 1884.

4Cervantes' "Don Quijote," Part II, chapter 47.

[Contents]

Rizal's Farewell Address

Address to Some Filipinos

"Countrymen: On my return from Spain I learned that my name had been in use, among some who were in arms, as a war-cry. The news came as a painful surprise, but, believing it already closed, I kept silent over an incident which I considered irremediable. Now I notice indications of the disturbances continuing, and if any still, in good or bad faith, are availing themselves of my name, to stop this abuse and undeceive the unwary I hasten to address you these lines that the truth may be known.

"From the very beginning, when I first had notice of what was being planned, I opposed it, and demonstrated its absolute impossibility. This is the fact, and witnesses to my words are now living. I was convinced that the scheme [116]was utterly absurd, and, what was worse, would bring great suffering.

"I did even more. When later, against my advice, the movement materialized, of my own accord I offered not alone my good offices, but my very life, and even my name, to be used in whatever way might seem best, toward stifling the rebellion; for, convinced of the ills which it would bring, I considered myself fortunate, if, at any sacrifice, I could prevent such useless misfortunes. This equally is of record. My countrymen, I have given proofs that I am one most anxious for liberties for our country, and I am still desirous of them.*But I place as a prior condition the education of the people*, that by means of instruction and industry our country may have an individuality of its own and make itself worthy of these liberties. I have recommended in my writings the study of civic virtues, without which there is no redemption. I have written likewise (and repeat my words) [117]that reforms, to be beneficial, must come from*above*, that those which come from below are irregularly gained and uncertain.

"Holding these ideas, I cannot do less than condemn, and I do condemn, this uprising,—as absurd, savage, and plotted behind my back,—which dishonors us Filipinos and discredits those who could plead our cause. I abhor its criminal methods and disclaim all part in it, pitying from the bottom of my heart the unwary who have been deceived.

“Return, then, to your homes, and may God pardon those who have worked in bad faith.

JOSÉ RIZAL.

“Fort Santiago, December 15th, 1896.

The Spanish judge-advocate-general commented upon the address:

“The preceding address to his countrymen which Dr. Rizal proposes to direct to them, is not in substance the patriotic protest against[118]separatist manifestations and tendencies which ought to come from those who claim to be loyal sons of Spain. According to his declarations, Don José Rizal limits himself to condemning the present insurrectionary movement as premature and because he considers now its triumph impossible, but leaves it to be inferred that the wished-for independence can be gained by procedures less dishonorable than those now being followed by the rebels, when the culture of the people shall be a most valuable asset for the combat and guarantee its successful issue.
“For Rizal the question is of opportuneness, not of principles nor of aims. His manifesto might be summarized in these words: ‘Because of my proofs of the rebellion’s certainty to fail, lay down your arms, my countrymen. Later I shall lead you to the Promised Land.’

“So far from being conducive to peace, it could advance in the future the spirit of rebellion. For this reason the publication of [119]the proposed address seems impolitic, and I would recommend to Your Excellency to forbid its being made public, but to order that all these papers be forwarded to the Judge Advocate therein and added to the case against Rizal.”
“Manila, December 19th, 1896.”[123]
[Contents]

Rizal's Defence

These "Additions" were really Doctor Rizal's defence before the court martial which condemned him and pretended to have tried him, on the charge of having organized revolutionary societies and so being responsible for the rebellion.

The only counsel permitted him, a young lieutenant selected from the junior Spanish army officers, risked the displeasure of his superiors in the few words he did say, but his argument was pitiably weak. The court scene, where Rizal sat for hours with his elbows corded back of him while the crowd, unrebuked by the court, clamored for his death, recalls the stories of the bloody assizes of Judge Jeffreys and of the bloodthirsty tribunals of the Reign of Terror. He was compelled to testify himself, was not permitted to hear the testimony given for the prosecution, no witness dared favor him, much less appear in his behalf, and his own brother had been tortured, with the thumbscrews as well as in other mediaeval and modern ways, in a vain endeavor to extort a confession implicating the Doctor.[125]
[Contents]

Additions to My Defence

Don José Rizal y Alonso respectfully requests the Court Martial to consider well the following circumstances:

First.—Re the rebellion. From July 6th, 1892, I had absolutely no connection with politics until July 1st of this year when, advised by Don Pio Valenzuela that an uprising was proposed, I counselled against it, trying to convince him with arguments. Don Pio Valenzuela left me convinced apparently; so much so that instead of later taking part in rebellion, he presented himself to the authorities for pardon.

Secondly.—A proof that I maintained no political relation with any one, and of the falsity of the statement that I was in the habit of sending letters by my family, is the fact that it [126]was necessary to send Don Pio Valenzuela under an assumed name, at considerable cost, when in the same steamer were travelling five members of my family besides two servants. If what has been charged were true, what occasion was there for Don Pio to attract the attention of any one and incur large expenses? Besides, the mere fact of

Sr. Valenzuela's coming to inform me of the rebellion proves that I was not in correspondence with its promoters for if I had been then I should have known of it, for making an uprising is a sufficiently serious matter not to hide it from me. When they took the step of sending Sr. Valenzuela, it proves that they were aware that I knew nothing, that is to say, that I was not maintaining correspondence with them. Another negative proof is that not a single letter of mine can be shown.

Thirdly.—They cruelly abused my name and at the last hour wanted to surprise me. Why did they not communicate with me before?[127]They might say likewise that I was, if not content, at least resigned to my fate, for I had refused various propositions which a number of people made me to rescue me from that place. Only in these last months, in consequence of certain domestic affairs, having had differences with a missionary padre, I had sought to go as a volunteer to Cuba. Don Pio Valenzuela came to warn me that I might put myself in security, because, according to him, it was possible that they might compromise me. As I considered myself wholly innocent and was not posted on the details of the movement (besides that I had convinced Sr. Valenzuela) I took no precautions, but when His Excellency, the Governor General, wrote me announcing my departure for Cuba, I embarked at once, leaving all my affairs unattended to. And yet I could have gone to another part or simply have staid in Dapitan for His Excellency's letter was conditional. It said—"If you persist in your idea of going to [128]Cuba, etc." When the uprising occurred it found me on board the warship "Castilla", and I offered myself unconditionally to His Excellency. Twelve or fourteen days later I set out for Europe, and had I had an uneasy conscience I should have tried to escape in some port en route, especially Singapore, where I went ashore and when other passengers who had passports for Spain staid over. I had an easy conscience and hoped to go to Cuba.

Fourthly.—In Dapitan I had boats and I was permitted to make excursions along the coast and to the settlements, absences which lasted as long as I wished, at times a week. If I had still had intentions of political activity, I might have gotten away even in the vintas of the Moros whom I knew in the settlements. Neither would I have built my small hospital nor bought land nor invited my family to live with me.

Fifthly.—Some one has said that I was the chief. What kind of a chief is he who is ignored [129]in the plotting and who is notified only that he may escape? How is he chief who when he says no, they say yes?
—As to the “Liga”:

Sixthly.—It is true that I drafted its By-Laws whose aims were to promote commerce, industry, the arts, etc., by means of united action, as have testified witnesses not at all prejudiced in my favor, rather the reverse.

Seventhly.—The “Liga” never came into real existence nor ever got to working, since after the first meeting no one paid any attention to it, because I was exiled a few days later.

Eighthly.—If it was reorganized nine months afterwards by other persons, as now is said, I was ignorant of the fact.

Ninthly.—The “Liga” was not a society with harmful tendencies and the proof is the fact that the radicals had to leave it, organizing the Katipunan which was what answered their purposes. Had the “Liga” lacked only a little of [130]being adapted for rebellion, the radicals would not have left it but simply would have modified it; besides, if, as some allege, I am the chief, out of consideration for me and for the prestige of my name, they would have retained the name of “Liga”. Their having abandoned it, name and all, proves clearly that they neither counted on me nor did the “Liga” serve their purposes, otherwise they would not have made another society when they had one already organized.
Tenthly.—As to my letters, I beg of the court that, if there are any bitter criticisms in them, it will consider the circumstances under which they were written. Then we had been deprived of our two dwellings, warehouses, lands, and besides all my brothers-in-law and my brother were deported, in consequence of a suit arising from an inquiry of the Administracion de Hacienda (tax-collecting branch of the government), a case in which, according to our attorney (in [131]Madrid), Sr. Linares Rivas, we had the right on our side.
Eleventhly.—That I have endured exile without complaint, not because of the charge alleged, for that was not true, but for what I had been able to write. And ask the politico-military commanders of the district where I resided of my conduct during these four years of exile, of the town, even of

the very missionary parish priests despite my personal differences with one of them.

Twelfthly.—All these facts and considerations destroy the little-founded accusation of those who have testified against me, with whom I have asked the Judge to be confronted. Is it possible that in a single night I was able to line up all the filibusterism, at a gathering which discussed commerce, etc., a gathering which went no further for it died immediately afterwards? If the few who were present had been influenced by my words they would not have [132]let the "Liga" die. Is it that those who formed part of the "Liga" that night founded the Katipunan? I think not. Who went to Dapitan to interview me? Persons entirely unknown to me. Why was not an acquaintance sent, in whom I would have had more confidence? Because those acquainted with me knew very well that I had forsaken politics or that, realizing my views on rebellion, they must have refused to undertake a mission useless and unpromising.

I trust that by these considerations I have demonstrated that neither did I found a society for revolutionary purposes, nor have I taken part since in others, nor have I been concerned in the rebellion, but that on the contrary I have been opposed to it, as the making public of a private conversation has proven.

Fort Santiago, Dec. 26, 1896.

JOSE RIZAL.[133][134]

[Contents]

Respecting the Rebellion.

The remarks about the rebellion are from a photographic copy of the pencil notes used by Rizal for his brief speech. The manuscript is now in the possession of Sr. Eduardo Lete, of Saragossa, Spain.

I had no notice at all of what was being planned until the first or second of July, in 1896, when Pio Valenzuela came to see me, saying that an uprising was being arranged. I told him that it was absurd, etc., etc. and he answered me that they could bear no more. I advised him that they should have patience, etc., etc. He added then that he had been sent because they had compassion of my life and that probably it would compromise me. I replied that they should have patience and that if anything happened to me I would then prove my innocence. "Besides, said I, don't consider me but our country which is the one that will suffer." I went on to show how absurd was the movement.—This later Pio Valenzuela testified.—He did not tell me that my name was [135]being used, neither did he suggest that I was its chief, nor anything of that sort.

Those who testify that I am the chief (which I do not know nor do I know of having ever treated with them), what proofs do they present of my having accepted this chiefship or that I was in relations with them or with their society? Either they have made use of my name for their own purposes or they have been deceived by others who have. Where is the chief who dictates no order nor makes any arrangement, who is not consulted in any way about so important an enterprise until the last moment, and then, when he decides against it, is disobeyed? Since the seventh of July of 1892 I have entirely ceased political activity. It seems some have wished to avail themselves of my name for their own ends.[136]

[Contents]

One by one they have passed on,
All I loved and moved among;
Dead or married—from me gone,
For all I place my heart upon
By fate adverse are stung.
Go thou too, O Muse, depart;
Other regions fairer find;
For my land but offers art
For the laurel, chains that bind,

For a temple, prisons blind.
But before thou leavest me, speak;
Tell me with thy voice sublime,
Thou couldst ever from me seek
A song of sorrow for the weak,
Defiance to the tyrant's crime.
From "A Mi Musa" (1884),
requested by a young lady of Madrid.

Friars and Filipinos

An abridged translation of

Dr. José Rizal's

Tagalog Novel, "Noli Me Tangere."
By
Frank Ernest Gannett.

New York:
The St. James Press.

[Contents]

Copyright, 1900,

by

Frank Ernest Gannett.

[Contents]

To

JACOB GOULD SCHURMAN,

President of Cornell University.[v]
[Contents]

Preface.

While serving on the staff of the first United States Commission to the Philippine Islands my attention was called to the life and writings of Dr. José Rizal. I found in his novel, "Noli Me Tangere," the best picture of the life of the people of those islands under Spanish rule, and the clearest exposition of the governmental problems which Spain failed to solve, and with which our own people must deal. It occurred to me that an English translation of Rizal's work would be of great value at the present time. My first intention was to reproduce the entire novel as it was written, but, after careful consideration, I thought best to abridge the story by the omission of some parts which did not seem essential to the main purpose of the work. The present volume is the result.

Readers should not understand any of Rizal's references to priests and friars as reflections upon the Roman Catholic Church. He was throughout his life an ardent Catholic, and died a firm adherent of the Church. But he objected to the religious orders in the Philippine Islands, because he knew well that they were more zealous in furthering their own selfish ends than in seeking the advancement of Christianity. From experience, Dr. Rizal knew that the friars, under cloak of the gospel ministry, oppressed his fellow countrymen, and took advantage of their superstition and ignorance. These wrongs he was brave enough to expose in his writings. In the friars he saw an obstacle to the education and enlightenment of the Filipino people, [vi]and, using moderate means, he did his utmost to secure reform. His writings will explain to us the cause of the hatred shown by the Filipinos toward the religious corporations, and will make clearer the nature of one of the present problems in the Philippines.

There are in the Philippines five religious orders: the Dominicans, Franciscans, Recoletos, Augustines and Jesuits. According to John Foreman, an eminent authority, the members of all of these, except the last named, come from the lower classes in Spain, and are on the whole comparatively ignorant and uncultured. Under the Spanish system of government certain provinces were assigned to each of the orders—except the Jesuits—and the friars were distributed among the different parishes. In the town assigned to him the friar had much authority. He was chief adviser in all civil affairs, and, by his influence over the superstitious natives,

maintained absolute control in all matters pertaining to the local government as well as to the local church. So firm was his hold that he led the Spanish government to believe that the islands could not be ruled without his aid. Knowing that his power rested on the ignorance of the people he discouraged education among them. When native Filipinos advanced so far as to prove an obstacle to the religious orders, as did Rizal and many others, the friars sought to destroy them. Forgetting their holy mission, the religious orders became commercial corporations, amassed enormous wealth, and gained possession of the most valuable parts of the islands, though to much of this property the titles are not clear.

From my own observation, and from information derived from the Spaniards themselves, I am convinced that the author has not overdrawn his pictures. In fact I have learned of instances where the oppression and practices of the friars were even worse than those described. Dr. [vii]Rizal has given us a portrayal of the Filipino character from the viewpoint of the most advanced Filipino. He brings out many facts that are pertinent to present-day questions, showing especially the Malayan ideas of vengeance, which will put great difficulties in the way of the pacifying of the islands by our forces. The reader will not fail to notice the striking similarity between the life of Ibarra, the hero, and that of Rizal, the author, a short sketch of whose career has been given in the following pages.

For assistance in preparing this volume for publication I offer sincere thanks to William H. Glasson, Ph.D., Instructor in History in the George School, Newtown, Pa. Dr. Glasson has read the entire manuscript and proofs, and I have been glad to avail myself of his advice on many doubtful points. I desire also to acknowledge my indebtedness for favors received to Horatio Green, Interpreter to the Supreme Court of the Philippine Islands, to W. G. Richardson, of New York, and to the publishers.

F. E. G.

Ithaca, N. Y., Dec. 1, 1900.[ix]

[Contents]

Contents.

Chapter I.Page

Don Santiago's Dinner1

Chapter II.

At the Dinner Table11

Chapter III.

Heretic and Revolutionist16

Chapter IV.

Captain Tiago23

Chapter V.

An Idyl on the Azotea29

Chapter VI.

Things Philippine35

Chapter VII.

San Diego and Its People40

Chapter VIII.

Ibarra and the Grave-Digger47

Chapter IX.

Adventures of a School Teacher51

Chapter X.

Lights and Shadows57

Chapter XI.

The Fishing Party59

Chapter XII.

In the Woods68

Chapter XIII.

In the House of Tasio77[x]

Chapter XIV.

The Eve of the Fiesta83

Chapter XV.

As Night Comes On87

Chapter XVI.

The Hoisting Crane92

Chapter XVII.

The Banquet104

Chapter XVIII.

The First Cloud112

Chapter XIX.

His Excellency116

Chapter XX.

The Procession125

Chapter XXI.

Doña Consolacion129

Chapter XXII.

Might and Right137

Chapter XXIII.

Two Visitors145

Chapter XXIV.

Episode in Espadaña’s Life148

Chapter XXV.

Schemes161

Chapter XXVI.

The Persecuted165

Chapter XXVII.

The Cock Fight172

Chapter XXVIII.

The Two Señoras181[xi]

Chapter XXIX.

The Enigma188

Chapter XXX.

The Voice of the Persecuted191

Chapter XXXI.

Elias’s Family200

Chapter XXXII.

Changes207

Chapter XXXIII.

Playing Cards with the Shades211

Chapter XXXIV.

The Discovery217

Chapter XXXV.

The Catastrophe223

Chapter XXXVI.

What People Say and Think229

Chapter XXXVII.

Vae Victis!235

Chapter XXXVIII.

The Accursed244

Chapter XXXIX.

Maria Clara is Married248

Chapter XL.

The Pursuit on the Lake259

Chapter XLI.

Father Dámaso Explains267

EPILOGUE271[xiii]
[Contents]

José Rizal.

Dr. José Rizal, of whose "Noli Me Tangere," the following story, is an abridgement, is the most striking character to be found in the history of the Philippine Islands. He was not only a great martyr to the cause of liberty, and to the advancement of his fellow men, but he was without doubt the greatest Filipino ever born, and his memory is cherished to-day by his people as we ourselves cherish the memory of Washington.

Rizal was born on June 19th, 1861, in the pueblo of Calamba, in the province of Laguna, on the Island of Luzon. He came of a Tagalog family, which, it is said, acknowledged a slight mixture of Chinese blood, and possessed considerable property. As a child he gave evidence of extraordinary precocity. He is said to have written poetry in his native tongue at eight years of age, produced a successful melodrama at fourteen, and later to have won prizes in literary contests with writers of recognized ability.

After passing through the University of Manila, and receiving much instruction at the hands of the Jesuit fathers, he was sent to Europe to complete his education. He pursued courses of study in Spanish and German universities, and won the degrees of Doctor of Medicine and Doctor of Philosophy. Besides acquiring a knowledge of seven languages he gained a brilliant reputation for proficiency in the branch of optical surgery. For a time he was the leading assistant in the office of a world-renowned specialist at Vienna.

While in Europe Rizal wrote several books and also [xiv]gave considerable time to sculpture and painting. His artistic ability was great, and some of his productions are now treasured by friends into whose possession they came. Rizal's best known work is his "Noli Me Tangere," written in Belgium about 1886 or 1887. This novel, with its vivid picture of life in the Philippines, and its exposure of Spanish misrule and oppression, won for him the bitter hatred of the friars, and inspired the relentless persecution which only ended with the taking of his life.

In 1889 Dr. Rizal returned to the Philippines, but was soon compelled to leave his native land in order to escape forcible banishment. After a short residence in Japan, he went to London, where he published a work on the

History of the Philippine Islands. About the same time a sequel to "Noli Me Tangere," entitled "El Filibusterismo," was published. The hatred of the priests against him was further inflamed by this production, and the government in Manila was forced by the friars to forbid the circulation of any of his writings. Copies of his novels were burned in the public squares, and it was worth one's life to be found possessing a copy. Until very recently it has been almost impossible to obtain a copy of Rizal's works, and it was necessary to go to Europe to secure the one from which the following abridged translation was made.

In 1892 Dr. Rizal was so overcome with a desire to see again his beautiful fatherland that he ventured, in the face of all the dangers that threatened him, to return to Manila. He had scarcely set foot on shore, however, before he was arrested and thrown in prison. The friars demanded his execution on the ground that he carried incendiary leaflets for the purpose of stirring up a rebellion, but subsequent inquiries showed that such leaflets [xv]had been introduced into his baggage at the custom house through the intrigues of the Augustine friars. Despite his indignant protestations of innocence; Rizal was summarily condemned by the Spanish General, Despujols, to banishment at Dapitan in the island of Mindanao. Although the trickery of the friars became known to him, Despujols lacked courage to revoke his order of banishment, for fear that he, too, would incur the hatred of the powerful religious corporations.

After four years of exile Rizal saw plainly that the hostility of the friars would make it impossible for him to live in his native land. In 1896 a plague of yellow fever broke out in the island of Cuba and Rizal volunteered to lend his medical services to the Spanish government. Ramon Blanco, then general-in-chief of the Spanish forces in the Philippines, accepted the generous offer and recalled the young man to Manila that he might sail at once for Cuba. Alarmed by demonstrations of popular affection for Rizal, who represented the aspirations of the Filipino people, the Spanish authorities broke faith with him and imprisoned him in the Fuerza de Santiago. He was arraigned on false charges, given a military trial, and at the dictation of the religious orders was sentenced to be shot as a traitor.

At dawn on December 30th, 1896, he was led to the place of execution on the beautiful Luneta, overlooking the tranquil surface of Manila Bay.

Notices of the event had been published throughout the islands and the day on which it was to occur was proclaimed a fiesta. Thousands gathered around the place selected, and so evident was the sympathy of the helpless Filipinos for the man who was to die for their sake that Spain marshalled ten regiments of her soldiers about the spot. The populace must be intimidated. A nation's hero was about to become a nation's martyr. [xvi]With face uplifted he glanced at the multitude about him and smiled. They tied his arms behind him and made him face the waters of the bay. In vain he protested and begged that he might die facing his executioners. A squad of his fellow countrymen, who were serving in Spain's army, were selected for the bloody work. They drew in position to shoot him in the back. The order was given to fire, but only one had the courage to obey. The bullet went straight and the hero fell, but another shot was necessary to despatch his life. His newly wedded wife remained with him to the end. The best hope of the Filipino people was crushed; a light in a dark place was snuffed out.

Rizal was no extremist, no believer in harsh and bloody methods, no revolutionist. He aimed to secure moderate and reasonable reforms, to lessen the oppressive exactions of the friars, to examine into titles of their land, and to make possible the education and uplifting of his people. He loved Spain as he did his own country, and repeatedly used his influence against the rebellious measures proposed by other Filipino leaders. His execution was only one of the numerous outrages which characterized Spain's reign in the Philippines.

In closing this short sketch of Rizal's life we can do no better than to quote the estimate of him made by Dr. Ferdinand Blumentritt, professor in the University of Leitmeritz, Austria, who prepared a biographical sketch of Rizal. Dr. Blumentritt said:

"Not only is Rizal the most prominent man of his own people, but the greatest man the Malayan race has produced. His memory will never perish in his fatherland, and future generations of Spaniards will yet learn to utter his name with respect and reverence."

Friars and Filipinos.

Chapter I.
Don Santiago's Dinner.

In the latter part of October, Don Santiago de los Santos, popularly known as Captain Tiago, gave a dinner. Though, contrary to his custom, he had not announced it until the afternoon of the day on which it was to occur, the dinner became at once the absorbing topic of conversation in Binondo, in the other suburbs of Manila, and even in the walled city. Captain Tiago was generally considered a most liberal man, and his house, like his country, shut its doors to no one, whether bent on pleasure or on the development of some new and daring scheme.

The dinner was given in the captain's house in Analoague street. The building is of ordinary size, of the style of architecture common to the country, and is situated on that arm of the Pasig called by some Binondo Creek. This, like all the streams in Manila, satisfies a multitude of needs. It serves for bathing, mortar-mixing, laundering, fishing, means of transportation and communication, and even for drinking water, when the Chinese water-carriers find it convenient to use it for that purpose. Although the most important artery of the busiest part of the town, where the roar of commerce is loudest and traffic most congested, the stream is, for a distance of a mile, crossed by only one wooden bridge. During six months of the year, one end of this bridge is out of order, and the other end is impassable during the remaining time.

The house is low and somewhat out of plumb. No one, [2]however, knows whether the faulty lines of the building are due to a defect in the sight of the architect who constructed it, or whether they are the result of earthquakes and hurricanes.

A wide staircase, with green balustrades and carpeted here and there in spots, leads from the *zaguan*, or tiled entrance hall, to the second story of the house. On either side of this staircase is a row of flower-pots and vases, placed upon chinaware pedestals, brilliant in coloring and fantastic in design. Upstairs, we enter a spacious hall, which is, in these islands, called *caida*. This serves to-night for the dining hall. In the middle of the room is a large table, profusely and richly ornamented, fairly groaning under the weight of delicacies.

In direct contrast to these worldly preparations are the motley colored religious pictures on the walls—such subjects as “Purgatory,” “Hell,” “The Last Judgment,” “The Death of the Just,” and “The Death of the Sinner.” Below these, in a beautiful renaissance frame, is a large, curious linen engraving of two old ladies. The picture bears the inscription “Our Lady of Peace, Propitious to Travellers, Venerated in Antipolo, Visiting in the Guise of a Beggar the Pious Wife of the Famous Captain Inés in Her Sickness.” In the side of the room toward the river, Captain Tiago has arranged fantastic wooden arches, half Chinese, half European, through which one can pass to the roof which covers part of the first story. This roof serves as a veranda, and has been illuminated with Chinese lanterns in many colors and made into a pretty little arbor or garden. The *sala* or principal room of the house, where the guests assembled is resplendent with colossal mirrors and brilliant chandeliers, and, upon a platform of pine, is a costly piano of the finest workmanship.

People almost filled this room, the men keeping on one side and the women on the other, as though they were in a Catholic church or a synagogue. Among the women were a number of young girls, both native and Spanish. Occasionally one of them forgot herself and yawned, but immediately sought to conceal it by covering her mouth with her fan. Conversation was carried [3]on in a low voice and died away in vague mono-syllables, like the indistinct noises heard by night in a large mansion.
An elderly woman with a kindly face, a cousin of Captain Tiago, received the ladies. She spoke Spanish regardless of all the grammatical rules, and her courtesies consisted in offering to the Spanish ladies cigarettes and betel nut (neither of which they use) and in kissing the hands of the native women after the manner of the friars. Finally the poor old lady was completely exhausted, and, taking advantage of a distant crash occasioned by the breaking of a plate, hurried off precipitately to investigate, murmuring: “*Jesús!*Just wait, you good-for-nothings!”

Among the men there was somewhat more animation. In one corner of the room were some cadets, who chatted with some show of interest, but in a low voice. From time to time they surveyed the crowd and indicated to each other different persons, meanwhile laughing more or less affectedly.

The only people who appeared to be really enjoying themselves were two friars, two citizens and an officer of the army who formed a group around a small table, on which were bottles of wine and English biscuits. The officer was old, tall and sunburnt, and looked as the Duke of Alva might have looked, had he been reduced to a command in the civil guard. He said little, but what he did say was short and to the point. One of the friars was a young Dominican, handsome and dressed with extreme nicety. He wore gold mounted spectacles and preserved the extreme gravity of youth. The other friar, however, who was a Franciscan, talked a great deal and gesticulated even more. Although his hair was getting gray, he seemed to be well preserved and in robust health. His splendid figure, keen glance, square jaw and herculean form gave him the appearance of a Roman patrician in disguise. He was gay and talked briskly, like one who is not afraid to speak out. Brusque though his words might be, his merry laugh removed any disagreeable impression.

As to the citizens, one of them was small in stature [4]and wore a black beard, his most noticeable feature being his large nose—so large that you could scarcely believe that it was all his own. The other was a young blonde, apparently a recent arrival in the country. The latter was carrying on a lively discussion with the Franciscan.
“You will see,” said the friar, “when you have been in the country a few months, and will be convinced that what I say is right. It is one thing to govern in Madrid and another to rule in the Philippines.”

“But——”

“I, for example,” continued Father Dámaso, raising his voice to prevent the other from speaking, “I, who can point to my twenty-three years of existence on bananas and rice, can speak with some authority on this subject. Do not come to me with theories or arguments, for I know the native. Remember, that when I came to this country, I was sent to a parish, small and largely devoted to agriculture. I did not understand Tagalog very well, but I received the confessions of the women and we managed to understand each other. In fact, they came to think so much of me that three years afterward, when I was sent to another and larger town, where a vacancy had been created by the death of the native parish priest, all the

women were in tears. They overwhelmed me with presents, they saw me off with bands of music——”

“But this only shows——”

“Wait, wait! Do not be in a hurry! My successor remained there a still shorter time, but when he left there were more people to see him off, more tears shed, and more music played, although he had treated the people worse than I, and had raised the parish dues to a sum almost double the amount I had exacted.”

“But allow me——”

“Furthermore, I was twenty years in the town of San Diego and it was only a few months ago—that—that I left. Twenty years! Surely any one will admit that twenty years is time enough to get acquainted with a town. There were six thousand people in San Diego, and I knew every one of them as if he were my own [5]child. I knew even the private affairs of them all; I knew in what way this man was ‘crooked,’ where the shoe pinched that one, what slips every girl had made and with whom, and who was the true father of each child, for I received all of their confessions and they always confessed scrupulously. I can prove what I say by Santiago, our host, for he has considerable property in that town, and it was there that we became friends. Well, then! This will show you what sort of people the natives are: when I went away, only a few old women and some lay brothers saw me off. And that, after I had been there twenty years! Don’t you see that this proves beyond a doubt that all the reforms attempted by the Ministers of the Government in Madrid are perfectly absurd?”

It was now the young man’s turn to be perplexed. The lieutenant, who had been listening to the argument, knit his brows. The little man with the black beard made ready to combat or support Father Dámaso’s arguments, while the Dominican was content to remain entirely neutral.

“But do you believe——,” the young man finally asked in a curious mood, and looking straight at the friar.

“Do I believe it? As I do the Gospel! The native is so indolent!”

“Ah! Pardon me for interrupting you,” said the young blonde, lowering his voice and drawing his chair closer, “but you have spoken a word that

arouses my interest. Is this indolence an inherent characteristic of the native, or is it true, as a foreign traveller has said in speaking of a country whose inhabitants are of the same race as these, that this indolence is only a fabrication to excuse our own laziness, our backwardness and the faults of our celestial system?"

"Bah! That is nothing but envy! Ask Señor Laruja, who knows this country very well, whether the native has his equal in the world for indolence and ignorance."

"It is a fact," replied the little man referred to, "that [6]nowhere in the world can any one be found more indolent than the native. Positively nowhere!"
"Nor more vicious and ungrateful!"

"Nor with less education!"

Somewhat uneasy, the blonde man began to glance about the room. "Gentlemen," he said in a low voice, "I believe that we are in the house of a native, and these young ladies may——"

"Bah! Don't be so sensitive. How long have you been in the country?"

"Four days," answered the young man somewhat ruffled.

"Did you come here as an employee?"

"No, sir. I came on my own account in order to become acquainted with the country."

"Man, what a rare bird you are!" exclaimed Father Dámaso, looking at him with curiosity. "To come here on your own account for such foolish ends! What a phenomenon! And when so many books have been written about this country——"

Then, striking the arm of his chair with sudden violence, he exclaimed: "The country is being lost; it is lost already. The governing power supports heretics against the ministers of God."

"What do you mean?" again asked the lieutenant, half rising from his chair.

"What do I mean?" repeated Father Dámaso, again raising his voice, and facing the lieutenant. "I mean what I say. I mean that, when a priest turns

away the corpse of a heretic from his cemetery, no one, not even the King himself, has the right to interfere, and still less to punish. And yet a general, a miserable little general——”

“Father! His Excellency is the vice-regal representative of His Majesty the King!” exclaimed the officer, rising to his feet.

“What do I care for His Excellency, or for any of your vice-regal representatives!” answered the Franciscan, rising in his turn. “In any other time than the present, he would have been thrown down stairs in the same way as the religious corporations treated the sacrilegious [7]governor Bustamente in his time. Those were the days when there was faith!”
“I’ll tell you right here that I don’t allow any—His Excellency represents His Majesty the King!”

“I don’t care whether he is king or rogue. For us there is no king other than the true——”

“Stop this immediately!” shouted the lieutenant in a threatening manner, and as though he were commanding his own soldiers. “Take back what you have said, or to-morrow I shall inform His Excellency.”

“Go and tell him at once! Go tell him!” answered Father Dámaso, sarcastically, at the same time approaching the lieutenant with his fists doubled. “Don’t you think for a moment that, because I wear the dress of a monk, I’m not a man. Hurry! Go tell him! I’ll lend you my carriage.”

The discussion began to grow ridiculous as the speakers became more heated, but, at this point, fortunately, the Dominican interfered.

“Gentlemen!” he said in a tone of authority, and with that nasal twang which is so characteristic of the friars, “there is no reason why you should thus confuse matters or take offense where it is not intended. We should distinguish between what Father Dámaso says as a man, and what he says as a priest. Whatever he may say as a priest cannot be offensive, for the words of a priest are understood to be absolutely true.”

“But I understand what his motives are, Father Sibyla!” interrupted the lieutenant, who saw that he would be drawn into a net of such fine distinction that, if he allowed it to go on, Father Dámaso would get off scot

free. “I know very well what his motives are, and Your Reverence will also perceive them. During the absence of Father Dámaso from San Diego, his assistant buried the body of a very worthy person. Yes, sir, an extremely worthy person! I had known the man from time to time and had often been his guest. What if he never had been to confession? I do not confess, either. To say that he committed suicide is a lie, a slander. A man such as he, with a son whose success and love were more than all the world to him; a man [8]who believed in God, who fulfilled his duty to society, who was honorable and just—such a man does not commit suicide. That is what I say! I am not telling you all that I think about this matter, and Your Reverence should be very thankful that I restrain myself.”

Turning his back on the Franciscan, he continued: “As I was saying, this priest, when he returned to the town, after maltreating his coadjutor, ordered that the man’s body be taken up and thrown out of the cemetery, to be buried I know not where. The town of San Diego was too cowardly to protest, though, in fact, very few people knew much about the matter. The dead man had no relatives in the town and his only son was in Europe. His Excellency, however, learned about the affair, and being at heart upright and just, he ordered that the priest be punished. As a result, Father Dámaso was transferred to another but better town. That is all there was to it. Now you can make all the distinctions you like.”

So saying, he left the group.

“I am very sorry to have touched upon so delicate a subject,” said Father Sibyla, “but, after all, if the change from one town to another was to your advantage——”

“How could it be to my advantage? How about all the things that I lost?” interrupted Father Dámaso, fairly boiling over with rage.

“Good evening, gentlemen! Good evening, Father!” said Captain Santiago, who at that instant entered the room, leading a youth by the hand. On saluting his guests in this manner, he kissed the hands of the priests, who, by the way, forgot to give him their blessing. The Dominican took off his gold-rimmed spectacles in order to examine the new arrival at better advantage, while Father Dámaso, turning pale at the sight, stared at the youth with eyes wide open.

“I have the honor of presenting to you Don Crisostomo Ibarra, the son of my deceased friend,” said Captain Tiago. “The young man has just arrived from Europe, and I have been to meet him.” At the mere mention of the name, exclamations were heard in all parts of the room. The lieutenant, forgetting himself [9]entirely, did not stop to salute his host, but at once approached the young man and surveyed him from head to foot. The youth exchanged the usual greetings with those who had gathered around him. He showed no striking peculiarity, except in his sombre dress, which was in deep contrast with that of the other persons present. His athletic build, his appearance, and every movement he made showed, however, that a fine mind and a healthy body had both been highly developed. You could see from his frank and vivacious face that he had Spanish blood in his veins. Although his hair, eyes and complexion were dark, his cheeks had a slight color, due, no doubt, to residence in cold countries.
“What!” he exclaimed with glad surprise, “the parish priest of my own town! Father Dámaso, my father’s intimate friend!” Every one in the room looked at the Franciscan, but the latter made no motion.

“You must excuse me, if I have made a mistake,” added Ibarra, somewhat in doubt because of the apathy of the friar.

“You have made no mistake,” the priest finally answered in a strained voice, “but your father was never an intimate friend of mine.”

Ibarra slowly withdrew the hand which he had offered, looking at the friar with great surprise. As he turned about, he came face to face with the lieutenant just approaching.

“My boy, are you the son of Don Rafael Ibarra?”

The young man bowed in acquiescence. Father Dámaso settled back into his arm-chair and fixed his eyes upon the lieutenant.

“Welcome to your country! May you be more happy in it than was your father!” exclaimed the officer in a trembling voice. “I had many dealings with your father and I knew him well, and I can say that he was one of the most worthy and honorable men in the Philippines.”

“Sir,” replied Ibarra with emotion, “your praise of my father puts me in doubt as to his fate. Even now I, his own son, am ignorant of it all.”

The eyes of the old man filled with tears. He turned [10]and hurriedly withdrew. Ibarra found himself standing alone in the middle of the room. His host had disappeared, and he turned to a group of gentlemen, who, as soon as they saw him coming, formed a semicircle to receive him.
"Gentlemen," he said, "in Germany, when a stranger attends any social function and there is no one present to introduce him, it is allowable for him to introduce himself. Permit me to avail myself of this practice. Gentlemen, my name is Juan Crisostomo Ibarra y Magsalin." The others gave their names in turn, of which the most were comparatively unknown.

"My name is A——a," said one of the young men, bowing stiffly.

"Then, perhaps, I have the honor of addressing the poet whose works have kept up my enthusiasm for my country? I have been told that you have stopped writing, but no one has told me why."

"Why? Because there is no use in invoking the muses for false and foolish ends. A case has been made out against one man for having put into verse a true story of Pero Grullo. I am not going to get myself into a similar scrape. They may call me a poet, but they shall not call me a fool."

"And can you not tell us what that true story was?"

"Yes. The poet said that the son of a lion is also a lion, and for saying this he narrowly escaped being banished."

"Dinner is ready," announced a waiter who had been borrowed from the Cáfé Campaña. The guests began to file into the dining room, not, however, without many sighs, and even some prayers among the women, especially the natives, that the dreaded affair would soon be over.[11]
[Contents]

Chapter II.
At the Dinner Table.

Father Sibyla wore a satisfied air. He moved along tranquilly, and his closed, thin lips showed no signs of disdain. On the other hand, the Franciscan was in a very bad humor. As he walked toward the table, he kicked over the chairs which happened to be in his way and boxed the ears of one of the cadets. The lieutenant was very solemn and grave.

The two friars instinctively started for the head of the table, perhaps by force of habit, and, as might have been expected, they met on opposite sides of the same chair. Then, with ponderous courtesy, each entreated the other to sit down, giving in turn his reasons why the other should take precedence. Every one at the table understood how both really felt in the matter, and all knew well that the one who did not take the coveted seat would grumble discontentedly for the remainder of the evening. The farce proceeded something like this:

"You take it, Brother Dámaso! It is for you!"

"No, you take it, Brother Sibyla!"

"You are an old friend of the family, the confessor of its deepest mysteries; your age, your dignity, your——"

"No, that is all right as far as age goes, but, on the other hand you are the priest of this suburb," answered Father Dámaso in an insincere tone, without, however, leaving the chair.

"As you order it, I obey," concluded Father Sibyla, making ready to sit down.

"But I do not order it," protested the Franciscan, "I do not *order* it."

Father Sibyla was about to take the seat without any further regard to the protests of his brother, when his eyes chanced to meet those of the lieutenant. According to the [12]religious customs in the Philippines, the highest military officer is inferior to even a convent cook. "*Cedent arma togæ*," said Cicero in the Senate. "*Cedent arma cottæ*," say the friars in the Philippines. Father Sibyla, however, was a person of some culture and

refinement, and, as soon as he noticed the expression on the lieutenant's face, said: "Here! We are now out in the world, and not in the Church. This seat belongs to you, lieutenant!" But, to judge from the tone of his voice, he thought that, although he was out in the world and not in the Church, the seat nevertheless belonged to him. The lieutenant, either to save himself trouble or in order to avoid sitting between two friars, declined the honor in a very few words.
Neither of the disputants had thought of the owner of the house. Ibarra saw him looking upon the scene and smiling with satisfaction.

"How is this, Don Santiago! Aren't you going to sit down with us?"

But all of the seats were already occupied, and Lucullus did not dine in the house of Lucullus.

"Sit still! Don't get up!" said Captain Tiago, laying his hand on the young man's shoulder. "The fact is that this feast is given in honor of the Virgin on account of your safe arrival. Here! Bring on the *tinola*! I ordered some *tinola* made expressly for you, for I feel quite certain that you have not had any since you left the Philippines a long while ago."

A large dish was brought in, still steaming and filled to the brim with *tinola*. The Dominican, after murmuring the *Benedicite* (to which only a few of those present could give the response), began to serve the contents of the dish. Either from carelessness or for some other reason, he passed to Father Dámaso a plate filled with the soup and stew, but containing only two small pieces of chicken, a bony neck and a tough wing. Meanwhile the others, especially Ibarra, were eating all sorts of choice bits. The Franciscan, of course, noticed this, mussed over the stew, took a mouthful of the soup, dropped his spoon with a clatter into his plate, and pushed the dish to one side. While this was going on, the Dominican appeared to be absorbed in conversation with the young [13]blonde. Señor Laruja had also begun to converse with Ibarra.
"How long has it been since you were last in this country?" said he.

"About seven years," responded Ibarra.

"You must have forgotten all about it."

“On the contrary, although my country seems to have forgotten me, I have always kept her in mind.”

“What do you mean?” interposed the blonde.

“I mean that for over a year I have not received any news from here, so that now I feel like a total stranger. I do not yet know how or when my father died.”

“Ah!” exclaimed the lieutenant.

“Where have you been that you did not telegraph?” asked one of the ladies. “When I was married, we telegraphed to the Peninsula.”

“Señora, for the last two years I have been in northern Europe, in Germany and in Poland.”

“And what country of Europe do you like best?” asked the young blonde, who had been listening interestedly.

“After Spain, which is my second fatherland, oh—any free country in Europe.”

“You seem to have travelled a great deal—what is the most remarkable thing that you have observed?” asked Laruja.

Ibarra appeared to be reflecting on the question. “Remarkable? In what way?”

“For instance, in the life of the different peoples,—their social, political and religious life——”

Ibarra meditated for some little time. “I always made it a point to study the history of a country before visiting it, and I find that national development invariably follows perfectly natural rules. I have always noticed that the prosperity or poverty of different peoples is in direct proportion to their liberties or their lack of liberty, or, in other words, in proportion to the sacrifices or selfishness of their forefathers.”

“And is that all you have observed?” asked the Franciscan, with a loud laugh. Up to this time, he had not uttered a single word, but had given his attention to the dinner. “It was not worth while to squander your

fortune [14]for the purpose of learning such a trifle—a thing that every school boy knows."

Ibarra looked at him intently, doubtful what to say. The guests glanced at each other, fearing that a quarrel would break out. "The dinner has been too long, and Your Reverence is affected by too much wine," Ibarra was about to reply, but he checked himself in time and only said: "Gentlemen, do not wonder at the familiarity with which our old parish priest treats me. He treated me this way when I was a child, and the years that have passed since then have not changed His Reverence. I derive a certain amount of pleasure from it, for I am reminded of those days when His Reverence was a frequent visitor at our house and honored my father's table."

The Dominican glanced furtively at the Franciscan, who was trembling. Ibarra continued, rising from his chair: "You will allow me to withdraw, for I have only just arrived, and I must leave town to-morrow. Besides, I have a great many things to do before I leave. The dinner is practically finished, and I drink very little wine and scarcely touch spirits. Gentlemen, here's to Spain and the Philippines."

Saying this, he emptied the glass, which, until then, he had not touched. The old lieutenant followed his example, but said nothing.

"Do not go!" said Captain Tiago to him in a low voice. "Maria Clara is coming immediately. Isabel has just gone to get her. The new parish priest of your town is also coming, and he is a saint."

"I shall come to-morrow before I leave. I have to make a most important visit yet to-night, and really must go!" With this he took his departure. In the meantime, the Franciscan had recovered himself.

"You see how it is," said he to the young blonde, gesticulating with his dessert knife. "It is nothing but pride. He could not bear to have a priest reprove him. Can decent people believe it? This is the evil consequence of sending young men to Europe. The Government ought to prohibit it."

That night, the young blonde wrote, among other things, in the first chapter of his "Colonial Studies": "How the [15]neck and wing of a chicken in a friar's plate of *tinola* can disturb the gayety of a feast!" And among his other observations were the following: "In the Philippines the most insignificant person at a dinner or a feast is the host. The owner of the house

has only to remain out in the street, and everything will go along beautifully. In the present state of affairs, it would be well to forbid the Filipinos to leave their country, and not to teach them how to read."[16]
[Contents]

Chapter III.
Heretic and Revolutionist.

Ibarra was still confused, but the evening breeze, which, in Manila, is at this time of the year always cool and refreshing, seemed gently to lift the hazy mist which hung over his eyes. He removed his hat and drew a deep, long breath.

Men of all nationalities passed by in swift carriages or in slow-going, rented *calesas*. He was walking at that slow pace characteristic alike of deep thought and laziness, and was making his way toward the Plaza of Binondo. He looked about in search of any old and familiar objects. Yes, there were the same old streets, the same old houses with white and blue fronts, the same old walls covered with whitewash or repainted in poor imitation of granite; there was the same old church tower, its clock with transparent face still marking the hours; there, too, were the old Chinese shops, with their dirty curtains and iron rods, one of which remained unrepaired as he himself had bent it when a boy.

"Things go slowly here!" he muttered and continued up the street past the vestry.

As they dished up flavored ices, the street vendors were still crying "sorbettes." The same little cocoanut oil lamps furnished light for the stands where native women and Chinese disposed of their sweetmeats and fruit.

"It is marvellous," he exclaimed. "There is the same Chinaman who was at that stand seven years ago. There is that same old woman whom I remember so well. Why, one might think my seven years in Europe but a night's sleep. And, by heavens, they have not yet repaired this broken place in the pavement!"

Indeed, the stone which had been torn out of the pavement before he left Manila had not yet been replaced. [17]While he was meditating upon the wonderful stability of things in so unstable a country, some one placed a hand upon his shoulder. With a start he looked up, and his eyes met those of the old lieutenant, who also had left the Captain's house. A smile had displaced the officer's usual harsh expression and characteristic frown.

“Be careful, young man!” said he. “Remember what happened to your father!”

“I beg your pardon. You seem to have esteemed my father very highly. Can you tell me what has been his fate?” asked Ibarra, gazing intently into the lieutenant’s eyes.

“Do you not know?” said the officer.

“I asked Don Santiago, but he said that he would tell me nothing until to-morrow. Have you no information regarding him?”

“Why, yes; everybody knows about him. He died in prison.”

The young man stepped back and stared wildly at the officer. “In prison! Who died in prison?” he asked in astonishment.

“Why, your father, who had been arrested,” answered the officer somewhat surprised.

“What! My father in prison! Arrested and imprisoned! Man, what are you talking about? Do you know who my father was? Are you——?” asked the young man, nervously grasping the officer’s arm.

“I don’t think that I am mistaken: Don Rafael Ibarra.”

“Yes. Don Rafael Ibarra,” repeated the young man, scarcely able to utter the words.

“I thought that you knew it,” said the officer, in a sympathetic voice, as he saw the emotion his words had caused. “I thought that you knew it; but be brave. Here, you know, no man can be honorable without being imprisoned.”

“I cannot believe that you are not jesting,” replied Ibarra, after a few minutes of deep silence. “Can you tell me for what offense he was imprisoned?”

The old man paused as if to meditate. “It seems strange to me that you have not been kept informed as to the affairs of your family.”[18]
“My father’s last letter, which I received a year ago, told me not to be uneasy if he failed to write to me, for he was very busy. He advised me to

continue my studies, he sent me his blessing——”

“In that case, he must have written the letter to you shortly before his death. It is almost a year since we buried him in his own town.”

“Why was my father arrested?” asked Ibarra in a voice full of emotion.

“The cause of his arrest was an honorable one. I must go to my quarters now; walk along with me and then I can tell you on the way. Take my arm.”

They walked for some time in melancholy silence. Deep in thought and nervously stroking his goatee, the officer sought inspiration before he could begin the pitiful tale.

“As you very well know,” he at last began, “your father was the richest man in the province, and, although he was loved and highly respected by many, there were some envious persons who hated him. Your father had a great many enemies among the priests and the Spaniards. Some months after your departure, trouble arose between Don Rafael and Father Dámaso, but I do not know what it was all about. Father Dámaso accused your father of not attending confession. In former times, however, he had never attended confession. Nothing was said about it, and he and the priest were good friends, as you will remember. Furthermore, Don Rafael was a very honorable man and much more upright and just than many who go to confession regularly. He was very conscientious, and, in speaking to me in regard to his troubles with Father Dámaso, used to say:

“‘Señor Guevara, do you believe that God will forgive a crime, a murder for instance, simply because that crime has been confessed to a priest—confessed to a man who is in duty bound to keep it secret? Will God pardon a man whose repentance is brought about by his cowardly fear of hell? I have a very different opinion of God. I cannot see how one evil can be corrected by another, nor how pardon can be procured by mere idle tears and donations to the Church.’ Your father always followed the strictest rules of morality. I may safely say that he never harmed [19]any one, but, on the contrary, always sought by doing good to offset certain unjust deeds committed by your grandfathers. However, his troubles with the priests continued and took on a dangerous aspect. Father Dámaso alluded to him from the pulpit, and, if he did not do so directly by name, it was an

oversight on his part, for anything might be expected from a man of his character. I foresaw that sooner or later the affair would have a bad ending." The old lieutenant paused for a few minutes and then continued: "About this time there came to the province a man who had been in the artillery, but had been thrown out of the ranks on account of his brutality and ignorance. This man had to make a livelihood. He was not allowed to engage in the work of an ordinary laborer, since that might damage Spain's prestige, but somehow obtained the position of collector of taxes on vehicles. He had no education whatever, and the natives soon found it out. A Spaniard who cannot read and write is a wonder to them, and hence he became the subject of all sorts of ridicule. Knowing that he was being laughed at, he became ashamed to collect his taxes. This had a bad effect on his character, which was already bad enough. People used to give him documents upside down to see him pretend to read them. He would make a show of doing so, and then, on the first blank space he found, would fill in some sprawling characters which, I may say, represented him very accurately. The natives continued to pay their taxes, but kept on ridiculing him. He fairly raved with anger and worked himself up to such a frame of mind that he respected none. Finally, he had some words with your father. It happened that one day, while the collector was studying a document which had been given to him in a store, some school boys came along. One of them called the attention of his companions to the collector, and they all began to laugh and point their fingers at the unhappy man. The collector finally lost his patience, turned quickly and chased his tormentors. The boys, of course, ran in all directions, at the same time mimicking a child learning the alphabet. Blind with rage because he could not reach them, he threw his cane, struck one of the boys on [20]the head and knocked him down. Not content with this, he went up and kicked the boy several times. Unfortunately, your father happened to be passing just at the moment. Indignant at what he saw, he seized the tax collector by the arm and severely reproached him for his actions. The tax collector in anger raised his cane to strike, but your father was too quick for him. With that strength which he inherited from his forefathers, he, as some say, struck the collector, or, as others claim, only gave him a push. The fact is that the man staggered and fell to the ground, and, in falling, struck his head against a stone. Don Rafael quietly lifted up the wounded boy and carried him to the court house near by, leaving the collector where he had

fallen. The ex-artilleryman began to bleed at the mouth and died without regaining consciousness.

"Naturally the law stepped in. They showered calumnies of all kinds upon your father and accused him of being a heretic and a revolutionist. To be a heretic is a great misfortune anywhere or at any time, but it was especially so at this particular time, for the chief magistrate of the province was the loudest prayer maker in the Church. To be a revolutionist is still worse. One might better have killed three highly educated tax collectors than be thus accused. Everybody deserted your father, and his books and papers were seized. He was accused of being a subscriber to 'El Correo del Ultramar' and to Madrid newspapers, of having sent you to Germany, of having in his possession incriminating papers and pictures, and—well, I don't know what not. He was even attacked because, although he was the descendant of Spaniards, he wore the dress of the natives. If your father had been anybody else, he would have been acquitted, for the doctors pronounced the death of the collector due to natural causes. His fortune, however, his confidence in the law, and his hatred for everything which seemed unlawful and unjust, cost him his life. I myself, much as I dislike begging for mercy, called upon the Governor General, the predecessor of the present Governor. I brought out the fact that a man who aided every poor Spaniard, who gave food and shelter to all, and whose veins were filled with the generous blood [21]of Spain—such a man could not be a revolutionist. In vain I argued for him, pledged my own life for him, and swore by my military honor. What did it all amount to? I was badly received, curtly and summarily dismissed, and called a fool."

The old man paused to take breath. His young companion neither looked up nor made a sound. The narrator proceeded: "I took charge of the case for your father. I called upon the celebrated Filipino lawyer, young A——a, but he refused to undertake the defense. 'I would lose the case,' he said, 'my defense would cause new accusations against him, and perhaps bring them upon me. Go and see Señor M——, who is an eloquent orator, a Spaniard and a man of great reputation.' I did so, and the celebrated lawyer took charge of the case, which he conducted in a masterful and brilliant manner. But your father had many enemies, some of whom did their work secretly. There were many false witnesses in the case, and their calumnies, which anywhere else would have been overthrown by a single sarcastic phrase from the defending attorney, were here given a great deal of weight. As fast

as the attorney proved the falsity of their accusations, new charges were brought forward. They accused him of having wrongfully taken possession of a large tract of land. They sued him for damages and for injuries caused. They said that he had dealings with the organized bandits or *tulisanes*, and that thus he had been able to keep his property unmolested. In fact, the case became so complicated that within a year no one understood it. The chief magistrate was called away from his post and replaced by another of good reputation, but unfortunately this magistrate, too, was displaced in a few months.

"The sufferings, disappointments and discomforts of prison life, and his great grief at seeing the ingratitude of so many supposed friends, finally broke down your father's iron constitution and he became fatally ill. When it was all over; when he had proved himself not guilty of being an enemy to his country, and innocent of the death of the tax collector, he died in prison, with no one to care for him in his last hours. I arrived just as he was expiring."

The old man had finished all he had to say. Ibarra, [22]overcome with grief at the pathetic story he had heard, could not utter a word. The two had arrived at the gate of the barracks. Stopping and shaking hands with the young man, the officer said: "My boy, Captain Tiago can give you the details. I must say good night, for my duty calls me." With deep emotion, Ibarra grasped the lean hand of the lieutenant, and then looked after him in silence until he disappeared in the building. Turning slowly about, he saw a carriage passing and made a sign to the cabman.
"Lala's Hotel," he said in a low voice.

"This fellow is just out of jail," said the cabman to himself as he whipped up his horses.[23]
[Contents]

Chapter IV.
Captain Tiago.

Captain Tiago was short in stature, but both his body and his face were well filled out. His complexion was clear and he did not appear to be more than thirty or thirty-five years old, although he was really more than that. In these times his face always wore a pleasant expression. His head was small, round and covered with hair as black as ebony, long in front and very short behind. This head, according to reports, contained a great many things. His eyes were small but not terrifying, and always without expression. In short, the Captain might have passed for a good-looking little man, if his mouth had not been disfigured by the use of tobacco and the betel nut, the juices of which trickled out of the corners of his lips and destroyed the symmetry of his features. However, despite these habits, both his own teeth and the two that the dentist had made for him, at twelve *pesos* each, were well preserved.

Tiago was considered one of the richest property owners in Binondo, and he also owned large plantations in the provinces of Pampanga and Laguna de Bay, especially in the town of San Diego. The rent of all these lands increased every year. San Diego was his favorite town on account of its excellent bathing place, its famous cockpit and the pleasant memories associated with the neighborhood. He spent at least two months in this town every year. Captain Tiago also had a great deal of property in Santo Cristo, in Analoague Street and in Rosario Street. In partnership with a Chinaman he carried on a profitable business in opium. It is understood that he had contracts with the Government for feeding the prisoners in Bilibid and that he supplied fodder to many of the principal houses in Manila. He was in good standing with the authorities, [24]able, clever, and even daring in his speculations in the necessities of others. Hence it was that at this time the Captain was as happy as a narrow-minded man could be in such a country. He was rich, and was at peace with God, the Government and man.

That Tiago was at peace with God was indisputable. In fact, there was no reason whatever for his not being so, since he was well situated as far as worldly matters go and had never loaned God any money. He never addressed God in his prayers, not even when he was in dire straits. He was rich, and his money, he thought, could pray for him. For masses and

prayers, God had created powerful and lofty priests; for special religious functions and rosaries, God, in His infinite goodness, for the benefit of the rich, had created poor people—poor people who for a *peso* would make half a dozen prayers, and would read all the Holy Books, even to the Hebrew Bible, if the pay were large enough. If at any time he found himself in hard straits and needed heavenly aid and was out of red Chinese candles, he applied to the saints, making them great promises in order to win their favor and convince them of his good intentions.

Captain Tiago was therefore beloved by the priests, respected by the sacristans, fondled by the Chinese candle-makers and fire-cracker merchants, and thoroughly happy in the religion of the world. Some even attributed to him great influence in the ecclesiastical court.

That the Captain was at peace with the Government must not be doubted simply because such a thing seems impossible. Incapable of conceiving a new idea and content with the *modus vivendi*, he was always willing to obey the latest official recruit in any of the Government offices and even ready to give him at all times of the year such presents as hams, capons, turkeys, and Chinese fruit. He was the first to applaud any tax imposed by the Government, especially when he scented behind it a chance of securing the contract for its collection. He always kept orchestras on hand to serenade Government officials of all grades from governor to the lowest Government agent, on their birthdays, saint's days, or when any occasion, such as the death of any of their relatives, or a birth in the[25]family connection should afford a pretext. He even went so far as to dedicate laudatory verses to his royal patrons on these occasions, thus honoring the "suave and loving governor" or the "valiant and mighty alcalde."

The Captain was a petty governor or *gobernadorcillo* of a rich colony of *mestizos*, in spite of the protests of many who considered him unfit for the position. He held the office for two years, but during this time he wore out ten frock coats, about the same number of high hats, and lost more than a half dozen of *gobernadorcillo* canes. His high hat and frock coat were always in evidence in the city hall, at the Government palace in Melacañan[1] and at the army headquarters, and they always appeared, too, in the cock-pit, in the market, in all processions, and in the Chinese shops. Dressed in this official costume with the tasseled cane, Captain Tiago was to be found everywhere, arranging, ordering, and putting in disorder,

everything with which he had anything to do—and all with wonderful activity and with still more wonderful gravity.

Sacrilegious people called him a fool; poor people called him a hypocrite, a cruel man who gained a livelihood by making others miserable; while his inferiors looked upon him as a despot and a tyrant. And the women? Ah, the women! Slanderous rumors circulated in the wretched *nipa* houses, and it was claimed that often lamentations and sobs, mingled with the cries of a child, could be heard. More than one young girl was pointed out by the malicious finger of the neighbors, with the remark: "See what a different expression she wears, and how plainly she shows evidences of her shame." But such things as these never robbed the Captain of any sleep; no young girl disturbed his rest.

Such was the Captain at that time. His past history was as follows: He was the only son of a very wealthy but avaricious sugar manufacturer of Malabon, who was unwilling to spend a cent in his education. For this reason young Santiago became the servant of a good Dominican, a very virtuous man, who tried to teach him all the valuable knowledge which he possessed. About the time when he was to have the happiness of studying logic, the death [26]of his protector, followed by that of his father, put an end to his studies and from that time on he devoted himself to business. He married a beautiful girl from Santa Cruz, who increased his fortune and gave him a social position.

Doña Pia Alba was not content with buying sugar, coffee and indigo; she wished to sow and reap, so the young husband bought lands in San Diego. It was in this town that he made the acquaintance and friendship of Father Dámaso and of Don Rafael Ibarra, the richest capitalist of the town.

The lack of an heir for the first six years of his married life gave him a great opportunity to accumulate wealth, which perhaps was a censurable ambition. Although Doña Pia was handsome, robust and well formed, she made her pilgrimages in vain. By advice of the devotees of San Diego, she visited the Virgin of Cayasay in Taal; she gave alms, and she danced in the procession before the Virgin of Turumba in Pakil under the May sun, but it was all in vain. Finally, on the advice of Father Dámaso, she went to Obando, and there danced at the *fiesta* of San Pascual Bailon and asked for a son. It is well known that in Obando there is a trinity—Our Lady of

Salambau, Santa Clara and San Pascual—which grants sons or daughters as required. Thanks to this wise triumvirate, Doña Pia became a mother, but like the fisherman in Macbeth, who ceased to sing after he found a rich treasure, Doña Pia lost her gayety, became very sad and was never seen to smile again. Every one, even to Captain Tiago, declared that it was a pure caprice. A puerperal fever put an end to her grief, leaving a beautiful daughter motherless. Father Dámaso baptized the child, and, as San Pascual had not given the son which had been asked for, the name of Maria Clara was given to it in honor of the Virgin of Salambau and of Santa Clara. The little girl grew up under the care of her aunt Isabel,—that good old lady with the manners of a friar whom we met before. The little girl lived the greater part of the time in San Diego on account of the healthful climate, and while there Father Dámaso paid her much attention.

Maria Clara did not have the small eyes of her father. [27]Like her mother, her eyes were large, black and shaded by long lashes, brilliant and smiling when she was playing, but sad, deep and pensive at other times. When a child her wavy hair was almost blond. Her nose was well formed, neither too large nor too flat. Her mouth was small and beautifully shaped like that of her mother, and her cheeks were set with dimples. Her skin was like silk and as white as snow, but her fond parent found traces of the paternity of Captain Tiago in her small and well shaped ears.

Aunt Isabel attributed the child's semi-European features to impressions made upon Doña Pia. She remembered having seen the mother a short time before the child was born, weeping before the image of San Antonio. Then, too, a cousin of Captain Tiago had the same features, the only difference being in the choice of the saints, by which the phenomenon was explained. With her it was either the Virgin or San Miguel. A cousin of Captain Tiago, a famous philosopher, who knew Amat2 by heart, explained it all by attributing it to the effect of the planets.

Maria Clara, the idol of all, grew up surrounded by love and smiles. She won the favor of even the friars when she was dressed in white for some religious procession, her long, wavy hair interwoven with flowers, two silver or golden wings attached to the shoulders of her dress, and holding two white doves, tied with blue ribbons, in her hand. When she grew up, she was so full of childish mischief that Captain Tiago did nothing but bless

the saints of Obando and advise everybody to buy handsome statues of that trinity.

In tropical countries a girl becomes a woman at the age of thirteen or fourteen years, like the plant which buds at night and blooms the following morning. During this period of transition, so full of mystery and romance, on the advice of the parish priest, Maria Clara entered the religious retreat of Santa Catalina in order to receive from the nuns a strictly religious education. She left Father Dámaso in tears, and likewise the only friend of her childhood, Crisostomo Ibarra. Shortly after the entrance to the convent, Ibarra went to Europe. For seven [28]long years, the girl lived under the vigilance of the Mother Superior in the iron-grated building, shut off from any communication with the outer world.

Don Rafael and Captain Tiago, in the meantime, while Ibarra was in Europe and Maria Clara in the convent, noticing the trend of affairs, and at the same time having in mind their own interests, decided that the children should be married. It is needless to say that this agreement, which was arrived at some years after Ibarra had left for Europe, was celebrated with equal joy by two hearts, on opposite sides of the world and amid very different surroundings. [29]

1Street in Manila.

2Archbishop and author of theological works.

[Contents]

Chapter V.
An Idyl on the Azotea.[1]

On the morning after the dinner party, Aunt Isabel and Maria Clara went to mass early: the former carefully carrying her glasses, so that she might be able to read "The Anchor of Salvation" during communion; the latter beautifully dressed, carrying her rosary of blue beads as a bracelet. The priest had scarcely left the altar when, to the disgust and surprise of her good aunt, who thought that her niece was as pious and as fond of prayer as a nun, the young girl desired to go home. After a great deal of grumbling, the old lady crossed herself several times, and the two arose to leave. "Never mind," said Maria, to cut off the scolding, "the good God will pardon me. He ought to understand the heart of a girl better than you, Aunt Isabel."

After breakfast, Maria Clara occupied herself with some embroidery while her aunt bustled about with a duster removing the traces of the social event of the preceding evening. Captain Tiago was busy examining some papers.

Every noise in the street and every passing carriage made the girl tremble with anxiety and wish that she were again back in the convent among her friends. There, she thought, she could see him without trembling and with perfect equanimity.

"I believe, Maria, that the doctor is right," said Captain Tiago. "You ought to go to the provinces. You are looking very pale and need a change of air. How does Malabon strike you, or San Diego?"

At the mere mention of the latter name, Maria Clara blushed and was unable to speak.

"Now, you and Isabel go to the convent to get your [30]things and say good bye to your friends," continued the Captain, without raising his head. "You will not return there. And in four or five days, when your clothes are ready we shall go to Malabon. —Your godfather, by the way, is not in San Diego at present. The priest whom you saw here last night, that young fellow, is now the priest in the town. He is a saint."

“I think you will find San Diego better, cousin,” said Aunt Isabel. “Our house there is better than the one in Malabon, and besides, it is nearly time for the *fiesta* to take place.”

Maria Clara was about to embrace her aunt for these welcome words, but just then a carriage stopped in front of the house and the young girl suddenly turned pale.

“That’s so,” said the Captain, and then, in a changed tone, exclaimed, “Don Crisostomo!”

Maria Clara let fall the work which she was holding in her hands. A nervous trembling passed over her. Then steps were heard on the stairs and presently a young, manly voice. And, as if this voice had some magic power, the girl shook off her emotion, started to run, and hid herself in the oratory. Both father and aunt had to laugh at this, and even Ibarra heard the closing of the door behind her.

Pale and panting, the girl finally subdued her emotion and began to listen. She could hear his voice, that voice which for so long a time she had heard only in her dreams. Beside herself with joy, she kissed the nearest saint, which, by the way, happened to be San Antonio, the abbot. Happy saint! Whether alive or carved in wood, always tempted in the most charming manner! Becoming quite herself again, she looked about for some crack through which she might get a peep at the young man. Finally, when he came in range of the key-hole and she again saw his fine features, her face beamed with smiles. In fact, the sight filled her with such joy that when her aunt came to call her, Maria Clara fell on the old lady’s neck and kissed her repeatedly.

“You goose! What is the matter with you?” the old lady was finally able to ask, after wiping away her tears.[31]
Maria Clara, in her modesty, covered her face with her round arm.

“Come! Hurry up and get yourself ready!” said the old lady in an affectionate tone. “While he is talking with your father about you—— Come, do not waste time!”

The girl did not respond, but allowed herself to be picked up like a child and carried to her room.

Captain Tiago and Ibarra were talking earnestly when at last Aunt Isabel appeared, half dragging her niece by the hand. At first the girl looked in every direction but at the persons present. At last, however, her eyes met Ibarra's.

The conversation of the young lovers was at first confined to the usual trifling remarks, those pleasant little things which, like the boasts of European nations, are enjoyable and interesting to those who are concerned and understand them, but ridiculous to outsiders.

Finally, she, like all sisters of Cain, was moved by jealously and asked: "Have you always thought of me? Have you never forgotten me in your many travels among so many great cities and among such beautiful women?"

And he, a true brother of Cain, dodged the issue, and, being something of a diplomat, answered: "Could I forget you?" And then, gazing into her deep, dark eyes, "Could I break a sacred vow? Do you remember that stormy night when you, seeing me in tears beside my dead mother, came to me and placed your hand—that hand which I have not touched for so long—upon my shoulder, and said: 'You have lost your mother,—I never had one.' And then you wept with me. You loved my mother, and she loved you as only a mother can love a daughter. It was raining then, you will remember, and the lightning flashed, but I seemed to hear music and to see a smile on the face of my dead mother.—O, if my parents were only living and could see you now!—That night I took your hand and, joining it with my mother's, I swore always to love you and make you happy, no matter what fate Heaven might have in store for me. I have never regretted that vow, and now renew it."[32]

"Since the day that I bade you good-bye and entered the convent," she answered, smiling, "I have always remembered you, and have never forgotten you in spite of the commands of my confessor, who imposed severe penances on me. I remembered the little games we used to play together and our little quarrels. When we were children you used to find in the river the most beautiful shells for our games of *siklot* and the finest and most beautifully colored stones for our game of *sinkat*. You were always very slow and stupid and lost, but you always paid the forfeit, which I gave you with the palm of my hand. But I always tried to strike lightly, for I was

sorry for you. You always cheated, even more than I, in the game of *chouka* and we generally quarrelled over it. Do you remember that time when you really became angry? Then you made me suffer, but when I found that I had no one to quarrel with, we made peace immediately. We were still children when we went with your mother one day to bathe in the stream under the shade of the reeds. Many flowers and plants grew on the bank of the river, and you used to tell me their strange Latin and Spanish names, for you were then studying at the Athenæum. I paid little attention, but amused myself by chasing butterflies and in trying to catch the little fish which slipped away from me so easily among the rocks and weeds of the shore. You suddenly disappeared from sight, but when you returned you brought a wreath of orange flowers and placed it on my head. On our way home, as the sun was hot, I collected some sage leaves from the side of the road for you to put into your hat and thus prevent headache. Then you laughed, we made up, and came the remainder of the way home hand in hand."

Ibarra smiled as he listened attentively to every detail of the story. Opening his pocket book, he took out a paper in which he had wrapped some withered but fragrant sage leaves. "Your sage leaves," said he in answer to her questioning glance. "The only thing you have ever given me."

She, in turn, drew a little, white satin bag from the bosom of her dress. "Stop!" she said, tapping his hand [33]with her own. "You must not touch it; it is a letter of farewell."
"The one that I wrote you before leaving?"

"My dear sir, have you ever written any other?"

"And what did I say then?"

"Many falsehoods; excuses of a bad debtor," replied she, smiling and showing how agreeable these falsehoods had been to her. "But be quiet! I will read it to you, but I will omit your polite speeches out of consideration for your feelings."

Raising the paper to the height of her eyes, in order to conceal her face, she began. "'My——,' I shall not read you what follows that, for it is not true." She ran her eyes over some lines and began to read again: "'My father wishes me to go away, in spite of my entreaties. He says that I am a man

and must think of my future and my duty; that I must learn how to live, which I cannot do in my own country, so that in the future I may be of some use. He says that if I remain at his side, in his shadow, in this atmosphere of business, I will never learn how to look ahead, and that when he is gone, I shall be like the plant of which our poet Baltazar speaks—as it always lives in the water, it never learns how to endure a moment's heat.—He reproached me because I wept, and his reproach hurt me so that I confessed that I loved you. My father stopped, thought a moment and, placing his hand on my shoulder, said in a trembling voice: "Do you think that you alone know how to love, that your father does not love you, and that his heart is not pained at being separated from you? It is a short time since your mother died, and I am already reaching that age when the help and counsel of youth are needed. And yet I consent to your going, not even knowing that I shall ever see you again. The future is opening to you, but closing to me. Your loves are being born; mine are dying. Fire blazes in your blood, but cold is gradually finding its way into mine. And yet you weep, and are not willing to sacrifice the present for a future useful to yourself and your country." The eyes of my father filled with tears and I fell upon my [34]knees at his feet and embraced him. I asked his pardon and said that I was willing to go.'"

The emotion which Ibarra manifested put an end to the reading. As pale as death, he arose and began to walk nervously from one side to the other.

"What is the matter?" she asked.

"You have made me forget that I have duties to perform, and that I ought to leave immediately for my town. To-morrow is the *fiesta* in memory of the dead."

Maria Clara stopped and silently fixed her large and dreamy eyes upon him for some minutes. Then taking some flowers from a vase near by, she said with emotion: "Go! I do not wish to detain you. We shall see each other again in a few days. Place these flowers on the graves of your father and mother."

A few moments later, Ibarra descended the stairs, accompanied by Captain Tiago and Doña Isabel, while Maria Clara locked herself up in the oratory.

“Do me the favor to tell Andeng to get the house ready, and that Maria and Isabel are coming. A pleasant journey!” While the Captain was saying this, Ibarra got into the carriage and drove off in the direction of the Plaza of San Gabriel.

A few minutes later the Captain shouted to Maria Clara, who was weeping by the side of the image of the Virgin: “Hurry up and light two *peseta* candles in honor of San Roque and another in honor of San Rafael, the patron saint of travellers. And light the lamp of Our Lady of Peace and Protector of Travellers, for there are many bandits about. It is better to spend four *reales* for wax and six *cuartos*for oil than to have to pay a big ransom later on.”[35]

1Roof of the first story used as a veranda.

[Contents]

Chapter VI.
Things Philippine.

Father Dámaso drove up in front of Captain Tiago's house and the Franciscan stepped to the ground just as Aunt Isabel and Maria Clara were getting into their silver-trimmed carriage. They saluted Father Dámaso, and he, in his preoccupation, gently patted Maria Clara on the cheek.

"Where are you going?" the friar asked.

"To the convent to get my things," replied the younger.

"Ah, ha! Ah, ha! We'll see who is the stronger. We'll see!" he muttered and turned away, leaving the two women in wonder as to what it all meant. The friar stepped along lightly, and reaching the stairs, went up.

"He must be studying his sermon," said Isabel. "Get in, Maria; we shall be late."

Whether Father Dámaso was studying his sermon or not we cannot say. At any rate, he was absorbed in some important matter, for he even forgot to extend his hand to Captain Tiago upon entering, greatly to the embarrassment of the Captain, who had to feign kissing it.

"Santiago, we have some very important matters to talk over; let us go to your office."

The Captain, somewhat disturbed, was unable to reply, but he obeyed and followed the big priest into his office. Father Dámaso shut the door behind them.

While they are conferring in secret, let us find out what has become of Brother Sibyla. The wise Dominican was not to be found at his parochial residence, for early, immediately after mass, he had gone to the Dominican convent, situated near the gate called Isabel the Second or Magallanes, according to which family is in power in Madrid. Paying no attention to the delicious odor of chocolate or to the rattling of money boxes and coins in [36]the treasurer's office, and scarcely answering the deferential salute of the treasurer, Father Sibyla went upstairs, crossed several corridors and rapped on a door.

“Come in!” answered a voice.

“May God give back health to Your Reverence!” was the greeting of the young Dominican as he entered.

A very feeble old priest was seated in a large arm-chair. His complexion was as yellow as the saints which Revera paints; his eyes were sunk deep in their orbits, and his heavy eyebrows, which were nearly always knit in a frown, added to the brilliant glare of his death-foreboding eyes.

“I have come to talk to you about the charge with which you have entrusted me,” said Father Sibyla.

“Ah, yes. And what about it?”

“Pshaw!” answered the young man with disgust, seating himself and turning his face away with disdain. “They have been telling us a lot of lies. Young Ibarra is a prudent boy. He does not seem to be a fool. I think he is a pretty good sort of a chap.”

“Do you think so?”

“Hostilities began last night.”

“So soon? And how did it come about?”

Father Sibyla related briefly what had taken place between Father Dámaso and Crisostomo Ibarra.

“Furthermore,” he added, in conclusion, “the young man is going to marry that daughter of Captain Tiago, who was educated in the college of our sisters. He is rich and would not want to make any enemies who might cause the loss of his happiness and his fortune.”

The sick man bowed his head as a sign of assent. “Yes, that is my opinion. With such a wife and such a father-in-law we can hold him body and soul. And if not, it will be all the better for us if he declares himself our enemy.”

Father Sibyla looked at the old man with surprise.

“That is to say, for the good of our whole corporation,” he added, breathing with difficulty. “I prefer open attacks to the foolish praise and adulations of friends, for, the truth is, flattery is always paid for.”

“Does Your Reverence think so?”

The old man looked at him sadly. “Always bear this in mind,” he answered, panting with fatigue, “that our [37]power will endure as long as it is believed in. If they attack us, the Government says, ‘They attack them, because they see in them an obstacle to their liberty, therefore let us preserve them.’”
“And if the Government gives them a hearing? Sometimes the Government ____”

“The Government will do no such thing.”

“Nevertheless, if some bold and reckless man, impelled by covetousness, should dare to think that he wanted our possessions——”

“Then, woe to him!”

For a moment both remained silent.

“Furthermore,” continued the sick man, “it will do us good to have them attack us and wake us up. It would show us our weaknesses and strengthen us. The exaggerated praises which we get deceive us, and put us asleep. We are becoming ridiculous and on the day that we become ridiculous we shall fall as we fell in Europe. Money will no longer flow into our churches, no one will longer buy our scapularies or girdles, and when we cease to be rich we shall no longer possess the great influence which we wield at present.”

“Pshaw! We shall always have our property, our plantations——”

“We shall lose them all as we lost them in Europe. And the worst of it is that we are working for our own ruin. For instance, this immeasurable ambition to raise the incomes from our lands each year, this eagerness to increase the rents, which I have always opposed in vain, this eagerness will be our ruin. The natives already find themselves forced to buy land in other localities if they want lands as good as ours. I fear that we are degenerating. ‘Whom the gods would destroy they first make mad.’ For this reason we should not be too hard on the people, for they are already grumbling under our exactions. You have considered well. Let us leave this thing to others, and keep up the prestige which we have and let us endeavor to appear before God with clean hands. May the God of pity have mercy on our weaknesses!”

“So you believe that the tax or tribute——”

“Let us talk no more of money!” interrupted the sick [38]man with disgust. “You were saying that the lieutenant and Father Dámaso last night——”
“Yes, Father,” answered the young priest smiling. “But this morning I saw the lieutenant again and he told me that he was sorry for what had occurred at the dinner. He said he thought that he had been affected by too much wine and that the same was true of Father Dámaso. ‘And your boast to tell the Governor?’ I asked jokingly. ‘Father,’ he answered, ‘I know when to make my word good so long as it does not stain my honor. That is just the reason why I wear only two stars.’”

After talking over several minor matters, Father Sibyla took his leave.

As a matter of fact the lieutenant had not gone to the Governor General’s palace in Melacañan with any report in regard to the occurrence of the preceding evening. However, the Governor General had learned of it through another source, and discussing the matter with one of his aides, he said:

“A woman and a priest can give no offense. I intend to live peaceably while I remain in this country and I do not wish to have any trouble with men who wear skirts. And, furthermore, I have found out that the Father Provincial has evaded my orders in this matter. I asked for the removal of that friar as a punishment. What was done? They removed him, but they gave him another and much better town. ‘Tricks of the friars,’ as they say in Spain.”

But when His Excellency found himself alone he ceased to smile. “Ah!” he sighed, “if the people were not so stupid they would put a limit to their reverences. But every people deserves its fate, and we are no different in this respect from the rest of the world.”

Meanwhile Captain Tiago had concluded his conference with Father Dámaso, or rather Father Dámaso had concluded it.

“I have already warned you!” said the Franciscan on taking his leave. “You could have avoided all of this had you consulted with me before, and, if you had not lied to me, when I asked you about it. See to it that you do not [39]do any more such foolish things, and have faith in your godfather.”

Captain Tiago took two or three steps towards the *sala*, meditating and sighing. All at once, as if some good idea had struck him, he ran to the oratory and put out the candles and the lamps which had been lighted for Ibarra's protection.

"There is still time enough," he murmured, "for he has a long road to travel."[40]

[Contents]

Chapter VII.
San Diego and Its People.

Not far from the shores of the Laguna de Bay lies the town of San Diego, surrounded by fertile fields and rice plantations. It exports sugar, rice, coffee, and fruits, or sells them at ridiculously low prices to the Chinese, who make large profits out of the credulity and vices of the laborers.

When the sky was serene and the atmosphere clear, the boys used to climb to the very peak of the old moss and vine covered church tower. And what exclamations they would utter when, from that high pinnacle, they looked out at the beautiful panorama that surrounded them. There before them lay a great mass of roofs, some *nipa*, some thatch, some zinc and some made out of the native grasses. And out of that mass, which here and there gave way to an orchard or a garden, every one of those boys could find his own little home, his own little nest. To them everything was a landmark; every tamarind tree with its light foliage, every cocoanut tree with its load of nuts, every bending cane, every *bonga* tree, every cross. Beyond the town is the crystal river, like a serpent asleep on a carpet of green. Here and there, its tranquil surface is broken by rocks projecting from its sandy bottom. In places, it is hemmed in between two high banks, and there the rapidly rushing waters turn and twist the half-bared roots of the overhanging shade trees. But further on it spreads itself out again and becomes calm and peaceful.

But what always attracts attention is a peninsula of forest projecting into this sea of cultivated land. There can be found hollow-trunked trees, a century old, trees which die only when struck by lightning and set on fire. They say, also, that even in that case the fire never spreads to any other tree. This old grove is held in a certain degree of awe, for around it have been woven many strange [41]legends. Of these the most probable, and consequently the least known and believed is the following:
When the town was still a miserable group of huts, when weeds grew in abundance in the so-called streets, and deer and wild boar roamed about at night, there arrived one day an old Spaniard. His eyes were deep and thoughtful and he spoke Tagalog fluently. After visiting the different estates and peddling out some goods he inquired for the owners of this grove,

which by the way, also contained several hot water springs. A number of persons claiming to be the owners presented themselves, and the old man purchased from them the grove, paying in exchange some money, jewelry and clothing. A short time afterward he disappeared, no one knew where.

His sudden disappearance made the people think for a time that he had been spirited away, but later on a fetid odor was noticeable near the grove, and some shepherds, upon investigation, found the body of the old man in a badly decomposed condition hanging from the limb of a *balitî* tree. When alive the old man had terrorized many by his deep and resonant voice, his sunken eyes and his silent laugh, but now that he was dead, and a suicide at that, the mere mention of his name gave the town women nightmare. Some of them threw the jewelry that they had bought from him into the river and burned all the clothing, and, for a long time after the body had been buried at the foot of the *balitî* tree, no one cared to venture near it. All sort of stories became current about the haunted place.

A shepherd, looking for his flock, said that he had seen lights in the grove. A party of young men, passing near the place, heard groans and lamentations. An unfortunate lover, in order to make an impression on the disdainful object of his affections, promised to spend a night under the tree and to bring her a branch from its trunk, but on the next day he was taken ill with a quick fever and died.

Before many months had passed, a youth came to the town one day. He was apparently a Spanish *mestizo*, declared himself the son of the dead stranger, and established himself in that far-off corner of the world. He began to farm the land and devoted himself especially to [42]the cultivation of indigo. Don Saturnino was a taciturn young man, violent and sometimes cruel, but very active and industrious. He built a wall around his father's grave and, from time to time, went all alone to visit it. A few years later he married a young girl from Manila who bore him a son, Rafael, the father of Crisostomo.
Don Rafael, from his earliest youth, was fond of farming. Under his care, the agriculture which had been started and fostered by his father was rapidly developed. New inhabitants flocked to the vicinity, and among them were a great many Chinese. The village grew very fast and was soon supporting a native priest. After it had become a *pueblo*, the native priest died and Father Dámaso took his place.

Still the grave and the adjoining lands were respected. At times, children, armed with sticks and stones, ventured to wander about, exploring the surrounding country and gathering *guayabas*, *papays*, *lomboy* and other native fruits. Then, all of a sudden, while they were busily engaged collecting the fruits, some one would catch a glimpse of the old rope hanging from the *balitî* tree, and stones would be heard to fall. Then some one would cry, "The old man!" "The old man!" Dropping fruit, sticks and stones, and leaping from the trees, the boys would flee in all directions through the thickets and between the rocks, not stopping until they emerged from the grove, pale and panting, some laughing, some crying.

You could not say that Don Rafael, while alive, was the most influential man in San Diego, although it is true that he was the richest, owned the most land, and had put almost everybody else under obligations to him. He was modest and always belittled his own deeds. He never tried to form a party of his own, and, as we have already seen, no one came to his aid when his fortune seemed to fail him.

Whenever Captain Tiago arrived in town, his debtors received him with an orchestra, gave him a banquet, and loaded him down with gifts. If a deer or a wild boar was caught he always had a quarter of it for his own table; if any of his debtors found a beautiful horse, within a half hour it would be in the Captain's stable. All of this is [43]true, but still when the Captain had his back turned they made fun of him and referred to him as Sacristan Tiago.
The *gobernadorcillo*1 was an unhappy fellow who never commanded but always obeyed; he never attacked any one, but was always attacked; he never ordered anybody, but everybody ordered him; and besides, he had to take the responsibility for everything that they had commanded, ordered or disposed. The position had cost him five thousand *pesos* and many humiliations, but, considering the profits he made, the price was very cheap.

San Diego was like Rome; not the Rome of the time of Romulus, when he marked out the walls with a plough, nor when, later, he bathed in his own blood and that of others and dictated laws to the world: no, San Diego was like the Rome of contemporaneous history, with this difference—instead of being a city of marble, monuments and coliseums, it was a city of *saualî*2 and cock-pits. The parochial priest of San Diego corresponded to the Pope in the Vatican; the *alferez*3 of the Civil Guard to the King of Italy

in the Quirinal, but both in the same proportion as the *sauali* or native wood and the *nipa* cock-pits corresponded to the monuments of marble and coliseums. And in San Diego, as in Rome, there was continual trouble. Everybody wanted to be the leading señor, and there was always some one else in the way. Let us describe two of these ambitious citizens.

Friar Bernando Salvi was the young and silent Franciscan whom we mentioned in a preceding chapter. He had even more of the customs and manners of his brotherhood than had his predecessor, the violent Father Dámaso. He was slender, sickly, almost always pensive, and very strict in the fulfillment of his religious duties as well as very careful of his good name. A month after his arrival in the parish almost all the inhabitants became brothers of the "Venerable Third Order," to the great grief of its rival, "The Brotherhood of the Most Sacred Rosary." His heart leaped with joy at seeing on every neck in the town [44]from four to five scapularies, a knotted cord around every waist, and every funeral procession dressed in habits of *guingon*. The sacristan mayor or head warden of the order made quite a little capital by selling and giving away all those things considered necessary to save the soul and overcome the devil.

The only enemy of this powerful soul saver, with tendencies in accord with the times, was, as we have already stated, the *alferez*. The women relate a story of how the devil tried one day to tempt Father Salvi and how the latter caught him, tied him to the bed post, whipped him with a lash and kept him tied fast for nine days. Thus he had been able to conquer the devil entirely. As a result, any one who persisted in being an enemy of the priest was generally considered a worse man than the devil himself—an honor which the*alferez* alone enjoyed. But he merited this reputation. He had a wife, an old, powdered and painted Filipino by the name of Doña Consolación. The husband and several other people called her by a different name, but that does not matter. Anyway, the *alferez* was accustomed to drown the sorrows of unhappy wedlock by getting as drunk as a toper. Then, when he was thoroughly intoxicated he would order his men to drill in the sun, he himself remaining in the shade, or, perhaps, he would occupy himself in beating his wife.

When her husband was dead drunk, or was snoring away in a siesta, and Doña Consolación could not fight with him, then, wearing a blue flannel shirt, she would seat herself in the window, with a cigar in her mouth. She

had a dislike of children and so from her window she would scowl and make faces at every girl that passed. The girls, on the other hand, were afraid of her, and would hurry by at a quick pace, never daring to raise their eyes or draw a breath. But say what you may, Doña Consolación had one great virtue; she was never known to look into a mirror.

These were the leading people of San Diego.

Toward the west of San Diego, surrounded by rice fields, lies a village of the dead. A single, narrow path, dusty on dry days, and navigable by boats when it rains, leads thither from the town. A wooden gate, and a fence, [45]half stone and half bamboo, seem to separate the cemetery from the people in the town, but not from the goats and sheep of the parochial priest of the immediate vicinity. These animals go in and out to rummage among the tombs or to make that solitary place glad with their presence.
One day a little old man entered the cemetery, his eyes sparkling and his head uncovered. Upon seeing him, many laughed, while a number of the women knit their eyebrows in scorn. The old man seemed to take no notice of these manifestations, but went directly toward a pile of skulls, knelt down and began to search among the bones. After he had sorted over with considerable care the skulls one by one, he drew his eyebrows together, as though he did not find what he was looking for, moved his head from side to side, looked in all directions, and finally got up and went over toward a grave-digger.

“Eh, there!” he shouted to him.

The grave-digger raised his head.

“Do you know where that beautiful skull is, the one white as the meat of a cocoanut, with a complete set of teeth, which I had over there at the foot of the cross under those leaves?”

The grave-digger shrugged his shoulders.

“Look you!” added the little old man, bringing out of his pocket a handful of silver. “I have more than that, but I will give it to you if you find the skull for me.”

The glitter of the coin made the grave-digger reflect. He looked over in the direction of the bone pile and said: “Isn’t it over there? No? Then I don’t know where it is.”

“Don’t you know? When my debtors pay me, I will give you more,” continued the old man. “It was my wife’s skull, and if you find it for me ____”

“Isn’t it there. Then I don’t know where it is,” repeated the grave-digger with emphasis. “But I will give you another.”

“You are like the grave that you are digging,” cried the old man irritably. “You don’t know the value of what you lose. For whom is this grave?”

“For a dead person, of course,” replied the bad-humored man.[46]
“Like a tomb! Like a tomb!” repeated the old man dryly. “You don’t know what you throw out nor what you swallow. Dig! dig!”

At this the old man, who was Tasio, the village philosopher, turned and started toward the gate.

In the meantime, the grave-digger had finished his job, and two little mounds of fresh, red clay were piled on either side of the grave. He took some betel nut out of his broad-brimmed hat, and began to chew away, looking with an air of stupidity at everything within his horizon.[47]

1Petty governor, the highest local official.

2Trellis work made of reeds.

3Local commander of the Civil Guard.

[Contents]

Chapter VIII.
Ibarra and the Grave-Digger.

Just as the old man was leaving the cemetery, a carriage stopped at the entrance. It looked as though it had made a long journey; the horses were sweating and the vehicle was covered with dust. Ibarra stepped out and was followed by an old servant. He made a gesture to the driver and then turned down the path into the cemetery. He was silent and grave.

“My sickness and my work have not permitted me to return, since the day of the funeral,” said the old servant timidly. “Captain Tiago said that he would see to it that a niche was arranged for, but I planted some flowers on the grave and erected a cross made by my own hands.”

Ibarra did not reply.

“Right there behind that large cross, señor,” continued the servant, making a gesture toward one of the corners just as they passed through the gate.

Ibarra was so preoccupied with sad thoughts that he did not notice the astonishment which some of the people in the cemetery manifested when they saw him enter. Those who were kneeling broke off their prayers and followed the young man, their eyes full of curiosity.

Ibarra walked along very carefully, and avoided stepping on the graves, which could be easily distinguished by the sunken ground. In other times he had walked over them; but to-day he respected them. His father lay in one of them. On coming to the other side of the large cross, he stopped and looked in all directions. His companion was confused and out of countenance. He searched for marks on the ground but could not find the cross anywhere.

“Is it here?” he murmured between his teeth. “No, it is over there, but the earth has been removed.”[48]
Ibarra looked at him with an expression of anguish.

“Yes,” he continued. “I remember that there was a stone by the side of the grave. The grave was a little short, a farm hand had to dig it, as the grave-

digger was sick at the time, but we will ask him what he has done with the cross."

They turned toward the grave-digger, who looked at them with curiosity. He saluted them, taking off his hat.

"Can you tell us which of the graves over there is the one which had a cross?" asked the servant.

The grave-digger looked toward the place and seemed to reflect. "A large cross?"

"Yes, a large cross," answered the old man with joy, looking significantly at Ibarra, whose face was somewhat animated.

"An ornamented cross, and fastened with reeds?" repeated the grave-digger, questioning the servant.

"That's it, that's it, yes, yes! Like this, like this," and the servant traced an outline of a Byzantine cross.

"And were there some flowers sown on the grave?"

"*Adelphas*, *sampagas* and pansies! That's it," added the servant, delighted, and offering the grave-digger a cigar. "Tell us where the grave is and where the cross."

The grave-digger scratched his ear and replied, yawning: "Well, the cross—I have already burned it up."

"Burned it? and why have you burned it?"

"Because the head priest so ordered."

"Who is the head priest?" asked Ibarra.

"Who? The one who does the whipping."

Ibarra put his hand to his head.

"But you can at least tell us where the grave is? You ought to remember."

The grave-digger smiled. "The body is no longer there," he replied tranquilly.

“What do you say?”

“Yes, no longer,” the man added in a joking tone. “Only a week ago I buried a woman in its place.”

“Are you crazy?” the servant asked. “Why, it is not yet a year since we buried him.”[49]
“Then that is the one, for it was many months ago that I took up the body. The head priest of the parish ordered me to do it, in order to bury it in the Chinese cemetery. But as it was heavy and it was raining that night——”

The man could not finish. He stepped back, half frightened at the expression on Crisostomo’s face. Ibarra made a rush at him, and, grabbing him by the arm, shook him.

“And what did you do?” the young man asked, in an indescribable tone.

“Honored sir, do not get angry,” he replied, pale and trembling. “I did not bury the body among the Chinese. In my opinion a person might better be a suicide than be buried among the Chinese. I threw the body into the lake.”

Ibarra laid both his hands on the man’s shoulders and looked at him for a long time in a terrifying manner. “You are only an unfortunate fellow,” he said, at last, and left the place on a run across bones, graves, and crosses, like a madman.

The grave-digger felt of his arm and murmured: “What would they do with the dead! The head priest whips me with his cane for having left the body in the cemetery when I was sick. Now this fellow comes along and nearly breaks my arm for having taken it up. That is just like the Spaniards! I’ll lose my place yet.”

Ibarra went on in great haste, keeping his eyes fixed in the distance. The old servant followed him, crying. Already the sun was hidden; a large, dark cloud hung over the western horizon; and a dry wind bent the tops of the trees and made the fields of sugar cane groan. With hat in hand, he went on. Not one tear dropped from his eye, not one sigh came from his breast. He hurried on as if he were fleeing from somebody, or something—perhaps the shade of his father, perhaps the tempest which was approaching. He hurried through the town and headed toward the outlying country, toward that old

house which he had not entered for so many years. The house was surrounded by a wall, near which many cacti grew, and as he approached they seemed to [50]signal to him. The windows seemed to open, the *ilang-ilang* joyfully waved its branches, and the doves fluttered about the little tower on the peak of their garden house.

But the young man did not notice these signs of welcome on his return to his old home. His eyes were riveted on the form of a priest who was advancing from the opposite direction. It was the priest of San Diego, that meditative Franciscan, the enemy of the *alferez*whom we have mentioned. The wind was playing with the wide wings of his hat, and the robe of *guingon* was flattened out, moulded by the wind to the outline of his form, marking his slender thighs and bow-legs. In his right hand he carried a cane. It was the first time that he and Ibarra had met.

As they approached each other, the young man stopped and looked at him fixedly. Father Salvi avoided the look and was somewhat distracted. This vacillation lasted only a moment. Ibarra made a rush toward him, and stopped the priest from falling only by grasping his shoulder. Then, in a voice scarcely intelligible, he exclaimed:

“What have you done with my father?”

Friar Salvi, pale and trembling, as he read the unmistakable sentiments which were depicted on the young man’s face, could not reply.

“What have you done with my father?” he asked again, his voice almost choking him.

The priest, shrinking from the tight grasp of Ibarra’s hand, at last made a great effort and said: “You are mistaken. I have done nothing with your father.”

“What? No?” continued the young man, the weight of his hand on the priest’s shoulder almost making him kneel.

“No, I assure you. It was my predecessor. It was Father Dámaso——”

“Ah!” exclaimed the young man, throwing the priest down and giving him a slap in the face. And leaving Father Salvi, he turned quickly and went toward the house.[51]

[Contents]

Chapter IX.
Adventures of a School Teacher.

Laguna de Bay, surrounded by mountains, sleeps tranquilly in the stillness of the elements, as if it had not joined the chorus of the tempest on the night before. As first rays of dawn appear in the eastern sky and awaken the phosphorescent myriads in the water, long, grey shadows appear in the dim distance, almost on the border of the horizon. They are shadows of fishermen's boats at work drawing in the nets.

Two men, dressed in deep mourning, from a lofty height contemplate the scene in silence. One is Ibarra, and the other is a young, meek-looking man with a melancholy countenance.

"Here is the place!" said the latter. "Here is where your father's body was thrown into the water! The grave-digger brought Lieutenant Guevara and me here and pointed out the spot."

Ibarra, with emotion, warmly grasped the young man's hand.

"You need not thank me!" replied the latter. "I owed your father for many favors he did me. The only thing I could ever do for him was to accompany his body to the grave. I had come to the town without knowing anybody, without any recommendations, without a reputation, without money, just as I am now. Your father protected me, procured a house for me, helped secure whatever was needed to advance education; he used to come to the school and distribute pennies among the poor and diligent pupils; he provided them with books and papers. But that, like all good things, did not last long."

Ibarra took off his hat and seemed to pray for a short time. Then he turned to his companion and said: "Did [52]you tell me that my father used to help the poor children? How is it now?"
"Oh, now they do the best they can."

"And don't they come to school regularly?"

"No, for their shirts are ragged and they are ashamed."

Ibarra kept silent for a few moments.

“How many pupils have you now?” he asked, with a certain interest.

“There are more than two hundred on the register, but only twenty-five in the class.”

“How does that happen?”

The school teacher sadly smiled.

“It is a long and tedious story,” said he.

“Don’t think that I am asking out of vain curiosity,” replied Ibarra, looking seriously at the distant horizon. “I have been meditating a great deal on the matter, and I believe that it is far better to try to carry out the ideas of my father than to try to avenge him. His tomb is sacred Nature; and his enemies were the people and the priest. I can forgive the people for their ignorance, and as to the priest, I will pardon his character because I wish to respect the religion which he represents. I wish to be inspired with the spirit of the one who gave me life, and, that I may lend my help, I wish to know what are the obstacles here in the way of education.”

“The country will bless your memory, Señor, if you can carry out the beautiful and noble ideas of your dead father,” said the school teacher. “You wish to know what the obstacles are? Very well. We are now in such circumstances that unless something powerful intervenes, there will never be any education here. First, because there is no incentive or stimulus to the children, and, secondly, even when there is an incentive, lack of means and many prejudices kill it. They say that the son of a German peasant studies eight years in the town school. Who would want to spend half of that time in our schools, when the benefits to be derived are so small? Here the children read, and commit to memory verses and at times entire books in Spanish, but all without understanding a single word. What good can [53]the sons of our farmers get out of the school so long as this is the case?”
“And you see the evil; have you not thought out a remedy?”

“Ah, poor me!” replied the teacher, shaking his head, “a poor teacher cannot alone fight against prejudices, against existing influences. Above all, I would need to have a school house, so that I would not, as I do now, have to teach from the priest’s carriage, under the convent. There, when the children want to read aloud, they naturally disturb the Father, who at times

comes down and very nervous, especially when he has his attacks, finds fault with the children and insults me. You know very well that under such conditions no one can do any teaching. The child does not respect the teacher from that moment when he sees him mistreated by some one else without maintaining his rights. The teacher, if he is to be listened to, or if his authority is not to be doubted, needs prestige, a good name, moral strength, and a certain amount of freedom. If you will allow me, I will give you an illustration. I wished to introduce some reforms and they laughed at me. In order to remedy the evil that I spoke of a moment ago, I tried to teach the children Spanish, because, not only does the Government order it, but because it will be a great advantage for them to know the language. I employed the simplest method, used simple phrases and nouns without making use of hard rules, with the expectation of teaching them the grammar as soon as they had learned the language. At the end of several weeks, almost all the smarter ones in the school understood me and were able to compose phrases in Castellano."

The teacher stopped and seemed to be in doubt. Then, as if he had made up his mind, he began again.

"I ought not to be ashamed of the history of my grievances. If any one had been in my place, he would have had the same story to tell. As I was saying, I began well. Several days later the priest, who was then Father Dámaso, sent the sacristan mayor to tell me that he wanted to see me. As I knew his character and was afraid to make him wait for me, I went up immediately, [54]saluted him and said good morning to him in Spanish. As was customary, when I saluted him, I advanced to kiss the hand which he held out, but just at that moment he withdrew it and, without replying to me, began to chuckle scoffingly. I was naturally disconcerted, and it was all done in the presence of the sacristan mayor. At the moment, I did not know what to say. I stood and looked at him while he went on laughing. I had already become impatient and saw that I was on the point of committing an indiscretion. All of a sudden, he stopped laughing and added insult to injury. With a cunning air, he said to me: 'So it is *buenos dias*, eh? *buenos dias*, ha, ha! How funny! Why, you know how to speak Spanish, do you?' And then he continued his laugh."
Ibarra could not keep back his smile.

“You laugh,” replied the teacher, also smiling. “I confess that I did not feel like smiling at that time. I felt the blood rush to my head, and a thunderbolt seemed to dazzle my brain. I saw the priest far off, very far from me. I started toward him to reply. The sacristan mayor interposed and said very seriously, in Tagalog: ‘You want to stop wearing borrowed clothes. Be content to speak in your own language and do not spoil Spanish, which is not meant for you. You have heard about Ciruela? Well, Ciruela was a teacher who did not know how to read, but he taught school.’ I wanted to detain him for a moment, but he went quickly into his room and closed the door violently. What was I to do? In order to collect my salary I have to have the approval of the priest on my bill, and have to make a journey to the capital of the province. What could I do to him—the moral, political and civil authority of the town, sustained by his corporation, feared by the Government, rich, powerful, always consulting, advising, listening, believing and attending to everything—what could I do to him? If he insulted me, I had to keep my mouth closed. If I talked back, he would throw me out of work, spoiling my career. And what good would it do—education? On the contrary, everybody would take up the priest’s side of the matter; they would criticise [55]me, they would call me vain, proud, arrogant, a poor Christian, poorly educated, and when not this, they would call me an anti-Spaniard and an agitator. The school teacher should have no authority. He should only be lazy, humble, and resigned to his low position. May God pardon me if I do not speak conscientiously and truthfully, but I was born in this country, I have to live, I have a mother to support and I have to be resigned to my lot.”

“And have you continued to be discouraged on account of this trouble? Have you attempted nothing since?”

“Would to God that it had ended there!” he replied. “Would to God that that had been the end of my misfortunes. The truth is that from that day I began to take a dislike to my profession. Every day the school brought to my mind my disgrace and made every hour a bitter one for me. But what could I do? I could not disappoint my mother. I had to tell her that the three years of sacrifices which she had made for me in order that I might learn the profession now made me happy. I had to make her believe that the profession was a most honorable one, that the work was most pleasant, that the road was strewn with flowers and that the fulfillment of my duty

produced nothing but friendships. If I had told her the contrary, I myself would still be as unhappy and would only make another unhappy, which was not only useless but a sin. So, I kept at my work and tried not to be discouraged. I tried to fight it down."

The school teacher made a short pause and then began again.

"You know that the books in most of the schools are in Spanish, excepting the Tagalog catechism, which varies according to the corporation which appoints the priest of the parish. The books generally used in the school are novenaries, the 'Doxology' and Father Astete's catechism, which are no more edifying than the books of heretics. On account of the fact that it was impossible to teach the children Spanish, as I wanted to do, and owing to the fact that I could not translate so many books into the native language, I decided to try to substitute [56]for them gradually, short verses, extracts from the best Tagalog books, such as the 'Treatise on Urbanity' by Hortensio y Feliza, and some of the little pamphlets on agriculture. Sometimes I myself translated small works, such as the 'History of the Philippines,' by Father Barranera, and afterward dictated to the pupils for their note books, adding at times some of my own observations. As I had no maps to teach them geography, I copied one of those of the province which I saw in the capital, and with this reproduction and, by the aid of the tiles on the floor, I was able to give them some ideas about the country. The new priest sent for me. Although he did not reprimand me severely, he told me, however, that my first duty was to teach religion, and that before I began to teach any such things I must prove by an examination that all the children knew by heart the 'Mysteries,' the 'Doxology,' and the 'Catechism of the Christian Doctrine.'

"So, in the meantime, I am endeavoring to convert the children into parrots so that they will know by heart all of these things of which they do not understand a single word. Many of the pupils already know the 'Mysteries' and the 'Doxology,' but I fear that I am making Father Astete's efforts useless, inasmuch as my pupils do not even distinguish between the questions and the answers, or what either of them signifies. Thus we shall die and thus shall do those who are yet to be born; yet in Europe they talk about Progress!"

“Let us not be so pessimistic,” replied Ibarra, rising to his feet. “The *teniente mayor* has invited me to attend a town meeting to be held in the tribunal. Who knows but that some plan for improvement may there be adopted!”

The school teacher arose to go, shaking his head in token of doubt.[57]
[Contents]

Chapter X.
Lights and Shadows.

The people of the town have made their preparation for the festival in honor of the patron saint, San Diego, and are gossiping about it, and about the arrival of Maria Clara, accompanied by her aunt Isabel. They rejoiced over it, because they liked her, and admired her beauty very much. They also rejoiced in the change it had made in the priest, Father Salvi. “He is often absent-minded during the holy services,” they said. “He scarcely speaks with us, and he plainly grows more thin and taciturn.” His cook saw this constantly and complained of the little honor that he did his dishes. But what most excited the wonder of the people were the two lights which one could see shining in the convent during the night, while Father Salvi was visiting at the house of Maria Clara! The old dames crossed themselves and kept on gossiping.

Juan Crisostomo Ibarra had telegraphed from the capital of the province his compliments to Aunt Isabel and her niece, but he had not explained his absence. Many thought that he had been arrested for assaulting Father Salvi on the afternoon of “All Saint’s Day.” But the comments increased still more when, on the afternoon of the third day, they saw Ibarra get out of a carriage in front of the little house of his betrothed, and courteously salute the priest, who was also making his way thither.

If we go to Maria Clara’s house, we will find it like a little nest among orange and *ilang-ilang* trees, surrounded by flowers and vines which creep up on bamboo sticks and wires, diffusing their delicious perfume. The rich fragrance of the *ilang-ilang* reaches even to the window which looks out on the lake. Here sit the two young lovers. Ibarra was saying to Maria Clara:

“To-morrow, before the first ray of morning, your desire shall be fulfilled. To-night, I shall arrange all so that nothing will be lacking.”[58]
“Then I will write to my friends, so that they may come along. Arrange it so that the priest cannot come.”

“And why?”

“Because he seems to be watching me. His deep and sombre eyes pain me. When he fixes them upon me, they frighten me. He speaks to me of extraordinary things, so incomprehensible, so strange. He asked me once if I had not dreamed about my mother’s letters. I believe he is half crazy. My friend Sinang, and Andeng, my foster sister, say that he is a little out of his head, for he neither eats nor bathes, and he lives entirely in the darkness. Don’t have him come!”

“We cannot but invite him,” replied Ibarra. “The customs of the country require it. He is the priest of your house and, besides, he has conducted himself nobly toward me. When the *Alcalde* consulted him on the business of which I have spoken to you, he had nothing but praises for me and did not pretend to offer the slightest obstacle. But I see that you are serious. I shall take care that he does not accompany us in the boat.”

Light steps were heard. They were those of the priest, who was approaching with a forced smile on his lips. They began to talk of different subjects, about the weather, the town and the festival. Maria Clara devised an excuse and went out.

“And while we are speaking about festivals,” said Ibarra, “allow me to invite you to the one which we are going to celebrate to-morrow. It is going to be a country picnic, which we and our friends are planning.”

“And where will it be held?”

“The girls want to hold it near the brook in the woods, near the *balitî* tree. So we will have to get up early to reach the place before the sun gets hot.”

The priest reflected, and a moment later replied: “The invitation is very tempting, and I accept it in order to prove that I hold no grudge against you for what has happened in the past. But I will have to be a little late, as I must fulfill my religious duties first. How happy to be like you, entirely free and independent!”

A few minutes later, Ibarra took his leave in order to arrange for the picnic on the following day. It was already quite dark when he left the house.[59]
[Contents]

Chapter XI.
The Fishing Party.

The stars were still shining in the sapphire heavens, and the birds were sleeping on the branches of the trees, when a jolly little party, by the light from the pitch torches, wandered through the streets of the town toward the lake.

Five young maidens, clinging to each other's hands or belts, tripped along briskly. Behind them came several elderly women and a number of servants gracefully carrying on their heads baskets filled with provisions and various dishes for the picnic. On seeing their joyful faces, with their youthful smiles, their beautiful black hair as it floated in the breeze, and the wide folds of their pretty dresses, you would have taken them for goddesses of the night and would have thought that they were fleeing from day—if perchance you had not already known that it was Maria Clara and her four friends: jolly Sinang; her cousin, the serious Victoria; beautiful Iday; and the pensive Neneng, pretty, modest and timid.

They were talking with animation; they laughed; pinched each other; whispered in each other's ears and then burst out in shouts of merriment.

"You girls will wake up everybody in town. Don't you know that people are still asleep?" said Aunt Isabel, reprimanding them. "When we were young, we didn't make such a noise."

"But you didn't get up as early as we do, nor were the old men such great sleepers in your day," replied little Sinang.

They were quiet for a moment and were trying to talk in a low voice, but they quickly forgot themselves and were again filling the streets with their youthful laughter and melodious voices.[60]
Several young fellows were coming down the street, lighting their way with large bamboo torches. They were marching along almost noiselessly to the tune of a guitar.

"That guitar sounds as though some beggar were playing it," said Sinang, laughing. But when the young fellows caught up with the rest of the party, the girls suddenly became as quiet and as serious as though they never had

learned how to laugh. The young men, however, chatted away, saluted the ladies, laughed and smiled and asked half a dozen questions without giving the girls time to answer any one of them.

The two large *bancas*,1 which had been secured to transport the picnic party to the fishing grounds, were fastened together and picturesquely adorned with wreaths and garlands of flowers and a large number of vari-colored candles. Paper lanterns hung from the improvised covering of the *bancas*. Alternately with these were roses, pinks and baskets of fruits such as pineapples, *kasuys*, bananas,*guayabas* and *lanzones*. Ibarra had brought his carpets, blankets and rugs and arranged comfortable seats for the ladies. The poles and paddles used to propel the *bancas* had also been ornamented. In the better *banca* were a harp, guitars, accordeons, and a buffalo horn; while, in the other boat, a little fire had been lighted in an improvised stove in order that tea, coffee and *salabat*2 might be prepared for the light breakfast.

"The women sit here; the men, there," said the mothers on stepping into the *banca*. "Sit still and don't move, or we will be capsized."

"Cross yourselves before we start," said Aunt Isabel, as she traced the form of a cross on her breast.

"And are we to be here all by ourselves," asked Sinang, on seeing how the girls had been separated from the young men, by the assignment of the seats. Then making a grimace she asked again, "Are we going to be all alone? *Aray!*"

This *aray* was caused by a little pinch which her mother had given her on the arm in the way of a reprimand for her complaint.[61]
The *bancas* were now putting off slowly from the shore. The light from the torches and Japanese lanterns was reflected in the water, for the lake was as smooth as a mirror. In the far eastern horizon could be seen the first rosy tints of the approaching dawn.

Everything was very quiet. The young women, in consequence of the separation from the young men, seemed to be absorbed in meditation.

As the water was smooth as glass and the bamboo weirs where the fish were to be found were not far off, and, it was still early, it was decided that all

should stop paddling and take breakfast. The lights were put out, for the day had dawned and preparations were made for *desayuno*.3

The entire party became jolly as they breathed in the light breeze that had come up. Even the women, so full of presentiments a few moments ago, were now laughing and joking among themselves.

One young man alone of all the party remained silent. He was the pilot, an athletic-looking fellow, and interesting on account of his large, sad eyes and the severe lines of his lips. His long, black hair fell gracefully over his powerful neck. He wore a shirt of coarse dark cloth, through which his powerful muscles could be plainly seen as he manipulated with his strong arms the wide, heavy paddle as if it were only a pen. This paddle served both to propel and to steer the *bancas*.

More than once he was embarrassed when he caught Maria Clara looking at him. Then he would turn his eyes quickly to some other direction and look far off toward the mountain, or the shore of the lake. The young maiden pitied him in his solitude and offered him some biscuits. The pilot looked at her with surprise, but only for a moment. He took the biscuits, thanked her very briefly and in a voice scarcely audible.

No one else took any notice of him. The happy laughter and jolly conversation of the young men did not cause him to relax a single muscle of his face. Not even Sinang, with all her jollity, had any effect on him.[62]
"Wait a minute!" said Aunt Isabel to the boatman's son, who had made ready his net and was just about to go up on the *baklad* to take out the fish from the little enclosure at the end of the weir. "We must have everything ready, so that the fish may pass directly from the water to the pot."

Andeng, the pretty foster sister of Maria Clara, despite her clear complexion and laughing face, had the reputation of being a good cook. She prepared the rice, tomatoes, and *camias*,4 while some of the young men tried to aid or bother her, perhaps in order to win her good will. The other girls were busy cleaning and making ready the lettuce, cabbage and peas, and cutting up paayap in pieces about the size of a cigarette.

Finally Andeng announced that the kettle was ready to receive its guests—the fish.

The fisherman's son went up on top of the rack at the end of the weir. He took a position at the narrow entrance, over which might have been written: "All who enter here leave hope behind," if indeed the unfortunate fish would know how to read and understand it, for a fish who enters never gets out except to die. The rack is almost circular in form and about a meter in diameter, and is so arranged that a man can stand on top of one end of it and thus take out the fish with his net.

"There, it wouldn't tire me a bit to fish that way," said Sinang, quite joyful.

All were watching attentively. Already some of them in their vivid imaginations thought they could see the fish wiggling their tails and trying to get out of the little net, their scales shining in the bright sun. However, the young man failed to catch a single fish in his first attempt.

"It ought to be full of fish," said Albino, in a low voice. "It is more than five days since we visited the place last."

The fisherman drew out his net a second time, but not a fish was there in it. The water, as it trickled through the meshes of the net in countless drops which reflected [63]the rays of the sun, seemed to laugh in silvery tones. An "Ah" of surprise, disgust, and disappointment escaped from the lips of all. The young fellow repeated the same operation, but with a similar result.

"You don't understand your business!" said Albino to him as he stepped up on the rack and took the net from the hands of the youngster. "Now you will see! Andeng, open up the kettle!"

But Albino did not understand his business, either. The net came up empty as before. All began to laugh.

"Don't make any noise," he said, "or the fish will hear it and will keep from being caught. This net must have a hole in it somewhere."

But every mesh in the net was perfect.

"Let me take it!" said Leon, Iday's lover, to Albino.

Leon first made sure that the enclosure was in good condition and then examined the net carefully and satisfied himself that there was nothing

wrong with it. He then asked: “Are you sure that no one has been out here for five days?”

“We are sure! The last time any one was out here was on All Saints’ Day.”

“Well, then, I am going to bring out something this time, unless the lake is bewitched.”

Leon lowered the net by its bamboo handle into the water, but a look of surprise was painted on his face. In silence he looked toward the neighboring mountain and continued moving the handle of the net from one side to the other. Finally, without taking the net out of the water, he murmured in a low voice: “An alligator.”

“An alligator!” exclaimed half a dozen voices, and the word was repeated again while all stood frightened and stupefied.

“What did you say?” they asked.

“I say that there is an alligator caught in the rack,” said Leon, and sticking the handle of the net into the water again he continued: “Do you hear that sound? That is not sand, it is hard skin, the back of the alligator. Do you see how he wiggles the bamboo pickets in the rack? He is struggling hard but he cannot do anything. Wait. [64]He is a large fellow; his body measures a palm or more in width.”
“What shall be done?” was the question.

“Catch him,” said one.

“*Jesús!* And who will catch him?”

Nobody offered to dive down to the bottom of the rack. The water was very deep.

“We ought to tie him to our *banca* and drag him along in triumph,” said Sinang. “The idea of his eating the fish which we ought to have!”

“I have never seen to this day a live alligator,” said Maria Clara.

The pilot rose to his feet, took a long rope and went up cautiously to the platform on the top of the rack. Leon gave up his position to him.

With the exception of Maria Clara, none up till now had paid any attention to him. Now every one was admiring his fine stature.

To the great surprise of all and in spite of all their cries, the pilot leaped into the enclosure.

“Take this knife!” shouted Crisostomo, drawing out a wide-bladed Toledo knife.

But already a thousand little bubbles were rising to the surface of the water, and all that was going on in the depths below was wrapped in mystery.

“*Jesús, Maria y José!*” exclaimed the women. “We are going to have a misfortune. *Jesús, Maria y José!*”

“Don’t be alarmed, señoras,” said the old boatman. “If there is any one in this province who can do it, it is that fellow who has just gone down.”

“What is his name?” they asked.

“We call him ‘The Pilot’; he is the best I have ever seen, only he does not like his profession.”

The water was being stirred violently, and it seemed that a fierce fight was being waged in the depths of the lake. The sides of the enclosure swayed to and fro, while the water seemed to be swirled by a dozen currents. All held their breath. Ibarra grasped tightly the handle of his sharp knife.

The fight seemed to be at an end. The head of the young man rose to the surface of the water, and the sight [65]was greeted by joyful shouts from all. The eyes of the women were full of tears.
The pilot crawled up on the platform carrying in his hand the end of the rope, and as soon as he was able pulled on it.

The monster appeared on top of the water. He had the rope tied twice around his neck, and once behind his forelegs. He was a large fellow, as Leon had already announced. He was beautifully colored and green moss was growing on his back. He bellowed like an ox, struck his tail against the sides of the enclosure, snapped at them, and opened his black, frightful-looking mouth, showing his long teeth.

The pilot, unassisted, raised him up out of the water. No one offered to help him. Just as soon as the animal was out of the water and placed on the platform, the pilot put his foot on his back. Then, closing the animal's massive jaws, he tried to tie his big snout tight with the rope. The reptile made a last effort, doubled up his body, struck the floor of the platform with his powerful tail and, breaking loose, made a leap into the water of the lake, on the other side of the weir, at the same time dragging with him his captor. It seemed that the pilot would be a dead man. A cry of horror went up from all.

Like a flash of lightning, another body leaped into the water. So quickly was it done that they had scarcely time to see that it was Ibarra. Maria Clara did not faint, simply because the Filipinos do not know how to faint.

They all saw the water become colored, and tinged with blood. The young fisherman leaped to the bottom with his bolo in his hand; his father followed him. But, scarcely had they disappeared, when they saw Crisostomo and the pilot reappear, clinging to the body of the reptile. The monster's white belly was slashed, while in his throat the knife still stuck like a nail.

It is impossible to describe the joy that came over the party at the sight; all arms were extended to help them out of the water. The old women were half crazed with joy, and laughed and prayed. Andeng forgot that her kettle had been boiling three different times; now it was [66]leaking and had put out the fire. The only one who could not speak was Maria Clara.
Ibarra was unhurt. The pilot had a slight scratch on his arm.

"I owe you my life!" said he to Ibarra as the latter wrapped himself up in the shawls and blankets. The voice of the pilot had a ring of sincerity.

"You are too bold," replied Ibarra. "Another time you must not tempt God."

"If you had never come back!" exclaimed Maria, pale and trembling.

"If I had never come back and you had followed after me," replied the young man, "I would have been with all my family in the bottom of the lake." Ibarra was thinking that in those depths lay the remains of his father.

The mothers of the girls did not want to go to the other *baklad* or weir. They preferred to go back home happy, for the day had commenced with a bad omen and they feared that they would suffer many misfortunes.

“It is all because we have not heard mass,” sighed one of them.

“But what misfortune have we had, señoras?” asked Ibarra. “The alligator was the unfortunate one.”

“That goes to show,” concluded Albino, “that, in all his fishing life, this reptile has never heard mass. I never saw him, I am sure, among the other reptiles who frequent the church.”

The *bancas* were turned toward the other fish rack, and it was necessary for Andeng to get the water boiling again.

The day was advancing; a breeze was blowing; little waves were stirred up on the water, and rippled around the alligator. The music began again. Iday was playing the harp, while the young men were playing the accordeons and guitars with more or less skill. But the one who played best was Albino.

The other weir was visited with an entire lack of confidence. Many of the party expected to find there the mate to the alligator, but Nature fooled them and every time that the net was lowered it was brought up full of fish.[67] They then headed for the shore of the lake, where is situated the forest of trees centuries old, owned by Ibarra. There in the shade and near the crystal brook the party were to take their breakfast among the flowers or under improvised tents.[68]

1A narrow canoe.

2A drink made of honey and ginger.

3A light, early breakfast.

4A native fruit.

[Contents]

Chapter XII.
In the Woods.

Very early that morning Father Salví had said mass, cleaning, according to his custom, a dozen dirty souls in a few minutes. The reading of a few letters, which had arrived well sealed with wax, seemed to cause the worthy curate to lose his appetite, for he allowed his chocolate to get cold.

“The Father is ill,” said the cook as he prepared another cup. “It is several days since he has eaten anything; of six dishes which I put on the table for him, he has not touched two.”

“It must be that he does not sleep well,” replied the servant. “He has nightmare since he changed his bedroom. Every day his eyes are sinking deeper, he grows gradually thinner, and is very yellow.”

As a matter of fact, it was a pitiful sight to behold Father Salví. He did not care to touch his second cup of chocolate, nor to taste the Cebu cakes. He walked pensively to and fro in the spacious *sala*, crumpling between his bony fingers some letters which he would read from time to time. Finally, he called for his carriage, got ready and ordered the coachman to take him to the woods where the picnic was to be held. Arriving at the place, Father Salví dismissed the carriage and all alone, entered the forest.

A shady but difficult path runs through the thicket and leads to the brook which is formed by the hot springs so plentiful at the base of Mount Makiling.

For some time, Father Salví was wandering among the thick underbrush, here trying to evade the thorns which entangled his habit of*guingon* as if to detain him; there trying to step over the roots of the trees which stuck up through the ground and made the inexperienced traveler [69]stumble again and again. Suddenly he stopped. Mirthful laughter and the sound of young voices reached his ears. The voices and the laughter seemed to come from the direction of the brook and each time seemed to be coming nearer.
“I am going to see if I can find a heron’s nest,” said a voice, beautiful and sweet, and at once recognized by the curate. “You know they say that if a person possesses one of those nests he can make himself invisible to

everybody. How I would like to see *him* and not have him see me! I could follow him everywhere."

Father Salví hid behind the thick trunk of an old tree and listened.

"That is to say, you want to do with him what the curate does with you: watch him everywhere?" replied the merry voice. "Be careful, for jealousy makes one grow thin and the eyes sink in."

"No, no. It is not jealousy, it is pure curiosity," replied the silvery voice, while the other repeated, "yes, yes, jealousy; that's what it is." And then she broke out in a merry chuckle.

"If I were jealous of *him* I would not use the heron's nest to make myself invisible to him, but would make him invisible to everybody else."

"But then you yourself would not be able to see him and you would not want that to happen. The best thing to do, if we find a heron's nest is to give it to the priest. Then he could watch us as much as he pleased, and we would not be troubled with the sight of him. What do you think of the idea?"

"But I don't believe in the story about the heron's nests, anyway," replied one. "But if I were really jealous I would know how to keep watch of a person and make myself invisible...."

"And how? How would you do it? Perhaps you would do as Sister Listener does in the convent?"

This reference to days passed in the convent provoked a jolly laugh all around.

Father Salví saw from his hiding-place Maria Clara, Victoria, and Sinang, wading in the stream. All three were looking into the water, which was like a mirror, in [70]search of the heron's nest. They were getting wet up to their knees, the wide folds of their bathing skirts allowing one to guess how graceful were the curves of their limbs. They were wearing their hair loose and their arms were bare. Striped, bright-colored bodices covered their breasts. The three lasses, at the same time that they were hunting for that which did not exist, collected flowers and plants which were growing on the banks of the stream.

The religious Acteon, pale and immovable, stood gazing upon Maria Clara, that chaste Diana. The eyes which shone in those dark orbits never tired of admiring those white and beautiful arms, that pretty, round neck, those tiny and rosy feet as they played in the water. As he contemplated all this, strange feelings were awakened in his breast, new dreams took possession of his burning mind.

The three pretty forms disappeared in a thick growth of bamboo behind a bend in the stream, but their cruel allusions could still be heard by the curate. Intoxicated with the strange ideas in his head, staggering, and covered with perspiration, Father Salví left his hiding-place and looked about him in all directions with staring eyes. He stood immovable, in doubt. He took a few steps as if to follow the young women, but he turned about, and walked along the bank of the stream in order to find the rest of the picnic party.

Some distance ahead, in the middle of the stream, he could see a bathing place well enclosed by bamboo. He could hear, merry laughter and feminine accents coming from that direction. Still further down the stream he could see a bamboo bridge and some men in bathing. In the meantime, a multitude of servants were bustling about the improvised fireplaces, some engaged in plucking chickens, others in washing rice and roasting pig. And there on the opposite bank, in a clearing which had been made, were a number of men and women under a tent. The tent had been made by hanging canvas from the limbs of some of the old trees and by erecting a few poles. There in the group was the *alferez*, the *teniente mayor*, the coadjutor, the *gobernadorcillo*, the school teacher, a number, of past captains and lieutenants, including even [71]Captain Basilio, who was Sinang's father, and the former rival of the deceased Don Rafael. Ibarra had said to him: "The mere fact that we are parties to a law-suit does not mean that we have to be enemies." So it was that the celebrated orator of the conservative party had accepted the invitation to the picnic with enthusiasm, and had even brought along three turkeys and put his servants at the disposition of the young man.
The parish priest was received with respect and deference by all, even by the *alferez*.

“But where did Your Reverence come from?” some one asked on seeing his face full of scratches, and his habit covered with leaves and pieces of dried branches. “Has Your Reverence fallen down?”

“No, I lost my way,” replied Father Salví, looking down and examining his clothes.

Bottles of lemonade were opened, green cocoanuts were cut in two so that those who were coming out of the bath might have the refreshing milk to drink and the delicate meat to eat. The young women in addition received rosaries of *sampagas* interwoven with roses and *ilang-ilang*, which gave a beautiful fragrance to their loose hair. Some were sitting or lying in hammocks which had been hung from the branches of the trees; others were entertaining themselves in a game that was going on around a large, flat stone. Playing cards, checkers, dice and many other games were in progress.

They showed the alligator to the curate, but he seemed absorbed and paid no attention until they mentioned the fact that the wide wound in the animal’s neck had been made by Ibarra. Then, too, the pilot, the principal figure in the incident, had disappeared and could not be found anywhere.

Finally Maria Clara came out of the bath, accompanied by her friends, fresh as a rose when first it blooms, and when the dew on its divine petals glistens like diamonds. Her first smile was for Ibarra; and her first frown for Father Salví. The latter noticed this, but he did not even sigh.

It was now time to eat. The curate, the coadjutor, the *alferez*, the *gobernadorcillo*, and some of the captains, together [72]with the *tenente mayor* sat down at the table over which Ibarra presided. The mothers of the girls did not allow any one to eat at the table with their charges.
“Do you know anything yet, Señor Alferez, about the criminal who assaulted Father Dámaso?” asked Father Salví.

“About what criminal, Father?” asked the *alferez*, looking at the parish priest through his empty wine glass.

“About whom could it be? About the one who, day before yesterday, struck Father Dámaso, of course.”

“Struck Father Dámaso?” asked a number of voices.

The coadjutor was seen to smile.

“Yes; and Father Dámaso is now in bed. It is believed that the culprit was that same Elias who once threw you into a mud-hole, Señor Alferez.”

The *alferez* colored up a little, either from shame or too much wine.

“I thought that you were interested in the affair,” continued Father Salví, with a little jeering in his manner.

The *alferez* bit his lips and mumbled out a silly excuse.

The meal ended and, while tea and coffee were being served, the young and old distributed themselves about in various groups. Some picked up playing cards and others dice, but the young women, anxious to know the future, preferred to try their luck with the wheel of fortune.

“Come, Señor Ibarra,” shouted Captain Basilio, who was a little bit jolly. “We have a law-suit that has been pending for fifteen years, and there isn’t a judge in the Supreme Court in Manila who can decide it. Let us see if we can settle it on the chess board. What do you say?”

The game of chess began with much solemnity.

“If the game is a draw,” said Ibarra, “it is understood that the suit is off.”

About the middle of the game, Ibarra received a telegram which made his eyes glisten and his face grow pale. He put it in his pocket-book, not, however, without directing a glance at the group of young women who continued with much laughter to play the wheel of fortune.

“Check to the king!” said the young man.[73]
Captain Basilio had no other resort than to hide him behind the queen.

“Check to the queen!” said Ibarra, threatening it with his rook, which was defended by a pawn.

Not being able to cover the queen, nor to retire it on account of the fact that the king was behind it, Captain Basilio asked permission to study the situation a little.

“Certainly, with much pleasure,” replied Ibarra. “I will take advantage of the opportunity, for I have something to say to some of the members of that group over there.”

And rising to his feet, he gave his opponent half an hour to study it out.

Iday held in her hands the strip of cardboard on which was written forty-eight questions, while Albino held the book which contained the answers.

“That’s a lie! It’s not so! It lies!” cried Sinang, half in tears.

“What is the matter with you?” asked Maria Clara.

“Just imagine it: I asked the question ‘When will I have some sense?’ I threw the dice and he, this all-night-watching priest (Albino, the ex-seminary student) reads from the book: ‘When the frogs grow hairs.’ What do you think of that?”

And Sinang made a face at the former religious student, who was still laughing heartily.

“Who told you to ask such a question?” said her cousin Victoria. “Any one who asks such a question deserves just such an answer.”

“You ask a question!” said they all to Ibarra. “We have agreed that the one who receives the best answer shall receive a gift from the others. We have all asked our questions already.”

“And who has received the best answer?”

“Maria Clara, Maria Clara!” replied Sinang. “We made her ask the question whether you loved her or not: ‘Is your lover faithful and constant,’ and the book replied——”

But Maria Clara colored up, and, putting her hands over Sinang’s mouth, did not allow her to finish what she had to say.[74]
“Then, let me try it,” said Crisostomo, smiling.

He asked the question: “Will I succeed in my present undertaking?”

“You are going to get a bad answer,” exclaimed Sinang.

Ibarra threw the dice, and noting the number, they looked for the page in the little book with the corresponding answer.

“Dreams are only dreams,” read Albino.

Ibarra took out his pocket-book and opened it trembling.

“This time your book has lied,” he said, full of joy. “Read this!”

“Plan for school house approved; other matter decided in your favor.”

“What does that mean?” they all asked.

“Did you not tell me that the one who received the best answer was to get a present?” the young man asked, his voice trembling with emotion while he carefully divided the paper into two parts.

“Yes, yes!”

“Well, then! This is my gift,” he said handing half of the telegram to Maria Clara. “I am going to have a school house for boys and girls erected in the town. This school house will be my gift.”

“And this other piece: what does that mean?”

“I will give that to the one who has obtained the worst answer.”

“Then that is for me!” exclaimed Sinang.

Ibarra gave her the piece of paper and quickly went off.

“And what does this mean?”

But the happy young man was already far away from the little group and he did not reply. He had gone to finish the game of chess.

After making the present to his betrothed, Ibarra was so happy that he began to play without stopping to think or even examining carefully the position of the chess. As a result, although Captain Basilio had defended

himself [75]only by the greatest effort, the young man made so many mistakes that the game resulted in a draw.
“We end the suit, we end the suit!” said Captain Basilio, happy over his success.

“Yes, we declare it off,” repeated the young man, “whatever decision the judges may have been able to reach.”

Each grasped the hand of the other and shook it with effusion.

In the meantime, while those present were celebrating the ending of the law-suit, of which both had long been tired, four Civil Guards and a sergeant suddenly arrived on the scene. They were all armed and had their bayonets fixed, a fact which naturally disturbed the merriment and brought fright into the circle of women.

“Let everybody be quiet!” cried the sergeant. “Whoever moves will be shot!”

In spite of this gruff boast, Ibarra rose to his feet and approached the sergeant.

“What do you wish?” he asked.

“That you give up at once the criminal named Elias who acted as pilot for your party this morning,” he replied, in a threatening tone.

“A criminal? The pilot? You must be mistaken!” replied Ibarra.

“No, sir; that Elias is now accused of another crime, of having laid his hands on a priest——”

“Ah! And is the pilot the one?”

“He is the same one, so we are told. You are allowing people of bad reputation to attend your festivals, Señor Ibarra.”

Ibarra looked at him from head to foot and replied with supreme contempt: “I don’t have to account to you for my actions. At our festivals everybody is well received, and you yourself, if you had come, would have been given a seat at the table, the same as the*alferez* who was here among us two hours ago.”

Saying this, Ibarra turned his back to him. The sergeant bit his mustache and ordered his men to search everywhere among the trees for the pilot, whose description he had on a piece of paper.[76]
Don Filipo said to him: "Take note that this description corresponds to that of nine-tenths of the natives. Take care that you do not make a mistake!"

At last the soldiers returned, saying that they had not been able to discover either a *banca*, or a man that aroused their suspicion. The sergeant murmured a few indistinct words and then marched off.

Soon the people became jolly again, but questions, wonder and comments were without end.

So the afternoon passed and the hour for departure arrived. Just as the sun was dropping below the horizon they left the woods. The trees seemed sad and all the surroundings seemed to bid them farewell and say: "Good-bye, happy youth; good-bye, dream of a day."

And a little later, by the light of glowing torches of bamboo and with the music of guitars, we leave them on the road toward the town.[77]
[Contents]

Chapter XIII.
In the House of Tasio.

On the morning of the following day, Juan Crisostomo Ibarra, after visiting his estates, went to the house of Tasio, the philosopher, his father's friend.

Quiet reigned in the old man's garden. The swallows were flying about the gables of the house, but they were making scarcely a sound. The windows were covered with vines which clung to the old, moss-covered wall and made the house appear all the more solitary and quiet. Ibarra tied his horse to a post and, walking almost on tip-toes, crossed the clean and well-cultivated garden. He went up the stairs and, as the door was open, walked in. An old man leaned over a book in which he seemed to be writing. On the walls of the room were collections of insects and leaves, maps, and some shelves of books and manuscripts.

Tasio was so absorbed in his work that he did not notice the arrival of the youth. The latter, not wishing to disturb the philosopher, tried to retire from the place, but the old man, looking up, said: "What? Are you here?" and showed no little surprise in his look.

"Excuse me," replied Ibarra, "I see that you are very busy."

"As a matter of fact I was writing a little, but it is not urgent, and I want to rest myself. Can I be useful to you in any way?"

Ibarra drew some papers from his pocket-book and replied: "My father was wont to consult you in many things, and I remember that he never had to do other than congratulate himself when he followed your advice. I have on my hands a small undertaking and I want to be assured of success."

Ibarra then related to him briefly his plan for the erection of a school house in honor of his betrothed. He [78]showed the stupefied philosopher the plans which had been returned from Manila.
"I wish that you would advise me as to what persons I ought first to have on my side in order to make the undertaking most successful. You are well acquainted with the inhabitants of the town. I have just arrived here and am almost a stranger in my country."

The old man examined the plans which were laid out before him. His eyes were full of tears.

“That which you are going to carry out was a dream of mine, the dream of a poor fool,” he exclaimed, greatly moved. “And now, my first advice to you is that you never come to consult me in regard to the matter.”

The young man looked at him in surprise.

“Because sensible people,” he continued, in an ironical tone, “will take you for a fool, like myself. People always consider every one a fool who does not think just as they do and, for this reason, they call me crazy. But I am obliged to them for that, for woe be to me when the time arrives that they say I have sense! That day, should it ever come, would deprive me of the little liberty which I have purchased by sacrificing my reputation for being sane.”

And the old man shook his head, as if to drive away a thought and continued: “My second advice to you is that you consult the curate, the *gobernadorcillo*, and all the people of good standing. They will all give you bad, foolish and useless advice, but to consult does not mean to obey. Try to appear to be following their advice as far as possible and make them think you are working according to their wishes.”

Ibarra sat thinking for a moment and then replied: “The advice is good but difficult to follow. Could I not carry out my work without a shadow reflecting upon it? Could I not carry out the good work in spite of all? Does truth need to be clothed in the garments of falsehood?”

“That’s it. Nobody likes the bare truth.”

“I hope to be able to realize all my hopes without encountering great resistance,” said Ibarra.

“Yes, if the priests lend you their hand; no, if they draw it away. All your efforts will be battered to pieces [79]against the walls of the curate’s house. The *alcalde* will deny to you to-morrow what he has granted you to-day. Not a mother will let her son attend the school, and then all your efforts will have just an opposite effect to that intended. You will discourage all others who might wish to attempt beneficent undertakings.”

“Nevertheless,” replied Ibarra, “I cannot believe in this power of which you speak. And even supposing it to be true, admitting that it is as you say, would I not still have on my side the sensible people and the Government?”

“The Government! The Government!” exclaimed the philosopher, raising his eyes and looking at the ceiling. “However much the Government may desire to uplift the country for its own benefit and that of the mother country; however generous may be the Catholic Kings in spirit, I must remind you in confidence that there is another power which does not allow the Government to see, hear, or judge except what the curates or provincial priests wish. The Government is afraid of the advancement of the people, and the people are afraid of the forces of the Government. So long as the Government does not understand the people of the country, the country will never get out from this guardianship. The people will live like weak, young children who tremble at the sound of the voice of their tutor, whose mercy they beg. The Government has no dreams of a great future, a healthy development of the country. The people do not complain, because they have no voice. They do not move, because they are too carefully watched. You say that they do not suffer, because you have not seen what would make your heart bleed. But some day you will see it! alas! some day you will hear it. When the light of day is thrown on their monstrous forms, you will see a frightful reaction. That great force, held back for centuries, that poison, distilled drop by drop, those sighs, so long repressed—all will come to light and will some day burst forth.... Who will then pay the accounts which the people will present and which History preserves for us on its bloody pages?”

“God, the Government, and the Church will never allow [80]that day to come!” replied Crisostomo, impressed in spite of himself. “The Filipinos are religious and they love Spain. The Filipinos will always know how much this nation has done for them. There are abuses; yes! There are defects; I do not deny it. But Spain is working to introduce reforms which will correct them; she is devising plans; she is not selfish. Can it be that my love for my native land is incompatible with love for Spain? Is it necessary to lower one’s self to be a good Christian, to prostitute one’s own conscience to bring about good? I love my fatherland, the Philippines, because I owe to her my life and my happiness—because every man should love his native land. I love Spain, the fatherland of my ancestors, because,

in spite of all that may be said, the Philippines owe to Spain, and always will owe to her, their happiness and their future. I am a Catholic. I hold dear the belief of my fathers, and I do not see why I have to bow my head when I am able to raise it; nor why I have to entrust it to my enemies, when I can trample on them."
"Because the field in which you are sowing your seed is in the hands of your enemies, and you are weak in comparison to them.... It is necessary that you first kiss the hand——"

But the young man did not allow him to go farther and exclaimed violently: "To kiss their hands! You forget that, between them, they killed my father; they threw his body out of its sepulchre: but I, I who am his son, I do not forget it, and, if I do not avenge myself, it is because I consider the prestige of the Church."

The old philosopher bowed his head. "Señor Ibarra," he replied slowly, "if you keep those memories—memories which I cannot advise you to forget—if you keep those memories, give up your plans and your undertaking and try to work good for your countrymen in another way. The undertaking needs another man than you for its execution, because to carry it out will not only require money and care, but, in our country, self-denial, tenacity and faith are also needed. The land is not ready for it; it has been sown only with darnel."

Ibarra understood the weight of these words, but he [81]was not going to be discouraged. Thoughts of Maria Clara filled his mind; he must fulfill his promise to her.
"Does not your experience suggest something other than this hard method?" he asked in a low voice.

The old man took him by the arm and led him to the window. A cool breeze was blowing from the north. Before his eyes lay the garden, stretching out to the large forest which served as a park.

"Why do we not have to do the same as that weak young bush loaded with roses and buds?" said the philosopher pointing to a beautiful rose bush. "The wind blows, shakes it and it bends itself down as if trying to hide its precious load. If the bush kept itself erect, it would be broken off, the wind would scatter its flowers and the buds would be blighted. The wind passes

over, and the bush straightens itself up again, proud of its treasure. Thus it would be with you, a plant transplanted from Europe to this stony ground, if you did not look about for some support and belittle yourself. Alone and lofty, you are in bad condition."

"And would this sacrifice bring the fruits that I hope for?" asked Ibarra. "Would the priest have faith in me and would he forget the offense? Would his kind not be able to feign friendship, to make a false show of protecting me, and then, from behind in the darkness, fight me, harass me and wound my heels, thus making me waver more quickly than they could by attacking me face to face? Given these premises, what do you think could be expected?"

The old man remained silent for some time, not being able to reply. At last he said: "If such a thing took place, if the undertaking failed, I would console you with the thought that you had done all that was in your power. And even so, something would be gained. Lay the first stone, sow the first seed and after the tempest has passed over, some little grain perhaps would germinate."

"I believe you," exclaimed Ibarra, stretching out his hand. "Not in vain did I look for good advice. This very day I shall go and make friends with the curate."

Taking leave of the old man, he mounted on his horse and rode away.[82]
"Attention!" murmured the pessimistic philosopher to himself, as he followed the young man with his eyes. "Let us observe carefully how Destiny will unfold the tragedy which began in the cemetery."

But this time the philosopher was truly mistaken. The tragedy had begun long before.[83]
[Contents]

Chapter XIV.
The Eve of the Fiesta.

It is the tenth of November, the eve of the *fiesta* to be celebrated in the town of San Diego. Departing from its habitual monotony, the town is displaying extraordinary activity in the church, houses, streets, cock-pit, and the fields. Windows are draped with flags and many-colored decorations. Music and the sound of exploding fireworks fill the air. Everywhere there is rejoicing.

In the streets at fixed intervals, beautiful arches of bamboo are raised, the wood carved and worked in a thousand different ways. The arches are surrounded with ornaments, the very sight of which brings joy to the heart of the small boy. In the church yard, a large and costly awning has been erected. It is propped up by bamboo poles and so arranged that the procession may pass under it. Under its shade the children play, run, jump, fall and otherwise manage to tear and soil their new shirts, which have been intended for the day of the festival.

In the public square a platform has been built of bamboo, nipa and boards, to serve as the stage. It is here that the comedy company from Tondo will tell wonderful tales, and will compete with the gods in the performance of miracles. Here Marianito, Chananay, Balbino, Ratia, Carvajal, Yeyeng, Liceria and the others will sing and dance. The Filipino loves the theatre, and always attends dramatic productions with a great deal of pleasure. The *gobernadorcillo* was very fond of the theatre, and, with the advice of the curate, he had selected for the *fiesta* the fantastic comedy: “Prince Villardo, or the Nails Pulled Out of the Infamous Cave,” a play full of magic and fireworks.

From time to time the bells ring out their merry sounds. Firecrackers and the booming of little cannon rend the [84]air. The Filipino pyrotechnist, who has learned his art without a teacher of any renown, displays his skill, setting up pieces representing towers, castles, and the like. Already the small boys are running at break-neck speed toward the outskirts of the town to meet the bands of music. Five organizations have been hired, besides three orchestras.

A band enters the town playing lively marches, and is followed by a lot of ragged and half naked pickaninnies: this one, perhaps, has on his brother’s

shirt; that one, his father's trousers. As soon as the music stops, these little tots know by memory the piece that has been played; they whistle and hum it with great delight, showing at this early age their musical talent.

In the meantime wagons and carriages arrive, bringing relatives, friends, and strangers. Gamblers are also on hand with their best fighting cocks and bags of money, ready to risk their fortunes on the green cloth or in the cock-pit.

"The *alferez* gets fifty dollars a night," murmured a little, chubby man when he heard of the recent arrivals, for there were already many rumors that these people bribed the officer so that they might not be interfered with by the law. "Captain Tiago," he added, "is going to come and will be banker in the monte game. Captain Joaquin brings eighteen thousand. There is going to be a *liam-po*,1 and the Chino Carlos is going to back it with ten thousand *pesos* capital. Big bettors will come from Tanauan, Lipa, and Batangas, as well as from Santa Cruz. It's going to be great! It's going to be great! This year Captain Tiago will not skin us as he has in the past, for he has not paid for more than three masses this year, and besides, I have a *mutya*2 of cacao. And how are all the family?"

"Very well, very well, thank you!" replied the visitors from the country.

But the place where the greatest animation reigns, where there is almost a tumult, is over there on the level piece of ground, a short distance from Ibarra's house. Pulleys creak, and the place resounds with the sound of the hammer, [85]the chiseling of stones, hewing of beams and the shouting of voices. A gang of workmen is making an excavation which will be wide and deep; others are busy piling up quarry stone, unloading carts, sifting sand, putting a capstan in place and so on.
"Put that here! That, there! Come, be lively about it!" shouts a little, old man with an animated and intelligent physiognomy as he goes about, a yard stick and plumb line in hand. He is the director of the work, Ñor Juan, architect, mason, carpenter, whitewasher, locksmith, painter, stone cutter, and, on occasion, sculptor.

"We must finish it immediately! To-morrow nothing can be done, and day after to-morrow the ceremony of laying the corner stone is to take place! Come, be lively!"

“Make the hole just large enough for this cylinder!” said he to one of the stone cutters who was chiseling off a large quadrangular stone. “Inside of this our names will be kept.”

Then he would repeat to every countryman who came along what he had already said a thousand times: “Do you know what we are going to build? Well, it is a school house, a model of its kind, something like those in Germany, but still better. The architect, Señor R., draughted the plans and I, I am in charge of the work. Yes, sir, you see this is going to be a regular palace with two wings, one for the boys and one for the girls. Here in the middle is to be a large garden with three fountains. There, on the sides, groves, where the children can sow and cultivate plants during the hours of recreation, thus improving the time. Just see how deep the foundations are to be: three meters and seventy-five centimeters. The building is going to have a cellar where the indolent pupils will be confined. This will be very close to the playing ground and the gymnasium, so that those who are punished may hear the diligent pupils enjoying themselves. Do you see this large space? Well, this will be a place for them to run and jump. The girls will have a separate garden with benches, swings, a special place for jumping the rope and rolling hoops, fountains and a bird-house. This is going to be magnificent!”[86]
He kept going from one end to the other, inspecting everything and passing his opinion on all.

“I find that you have got too much lumber here for a crane,” said he to a yellowish-looking fellow, who was directing some other laborers. “I would have enough, with three large beams, to form the tripod and with three others to serve as supporters.”

“O, pshaw!” replied the other, smiling in a peculiar way. “The more apparatus we give ourselves, the greater effect we will produce. The massiveness of it will make a bigger show and give it more importance. They will say: ‘What a lot of work has been done!’ You look at that crane that I am constructing. In a little while, I am going to ornament it with *banderolas*, garlands of flowers and leaves, and ... you will say afterward that you were right in hiring me, and Señor Ibarra cannot wish for more than that!”

The man laughed. Ñor Juan also smiled and shook his head.

As a matter of fact, the plan for the school had been approved by everybody and all were talking about it. The curate had asked to be allowed to be one of the patrons of the enterprise and he himself was to bless the laying of the corner stone, a ceremony which would take place on the last day of the San Diego festival, as it was considered one of the great solemnities.

The dismal presentiments of the old Tasio seemed to have been dissipated forever. One day Ibarra told the old man so, but the old pessimist only replied: “Things may go well at first, but be on your guard against masked enemies.”[87]

1A Chinese gambling game.

2A little white, pearl-like substance sometimes found in the cacao tree, which is supposed to be a lucky omen.

[Contents]

Chapter XV.
As Night Comes On.

Great preparations had also been made in the house of Captain Tiago. We are already acquainted with the man. His love for pomp and his pride in being a resident of Manila made it necessary that he should outdo the residents of the province in the splendor of his celebration. There was another thing, too, which made it necessary that he should try to eclipse all others—the fact that his daughter Maria Clara and his future son-in-law were also there. His prospective connection with Ibarra caused the Captain to be often spoken of among the people.

Yes, as a matter of fact, one of the most serious newspapers in Manila had printed an article on its first page, headed "Imitate Him!" in which they offered Ibarra much advice and highly eulogized him. The article spoke of him as "the illustrious and rich young capitalist." Two lines below, he was termed "the distinguished philanthropist," and, in the following paragraph, referred to as the "disciple of Minerva who went to his Mother Country to salute the real birthplace of arts and sciences." Captain Tiago was burning with generous emulation and was wondering whether he ought not to erect a convent at his own expense.

Days before the week of festivities, numerous boxes of provisions and drinks, colossal mirrors, pictures, paintings and his daughter's piano had arrived at the house. Maria Clara and Aunt Isabel were already living there. Captain Tiago came on the day before the beginning of the festival. As he kissed his daughter's hand, he made her a present of a beautiful religious relic. It was solid gold, and set with diamonds and emeralds, and contained a little sliver from Saint Peter's boat, in which Our Saviour sat while fishing.[88]

The Captain's interview with his future son-in-law could not have been more cordial. Naturally, the school house was the subject of conversation. Captain Tiago wanted him to call the school "The San Francisco School."

"Believe me!" he said. "San Francisco is a good patron saint. If you call it 'The Primary School,' you gain nothing. Who is Primary, anyway?"

Some friends of Maria Clara arrived and invited her to go for a walk.

“But return quickly,” said the Captain to his daughter, who asked for his permission. “You know that Father Dámaso is going to dine with us to-night. He has just arrived.”

And turning to Ibarra who was deep in thought, he added: “You will dine with us, too? You will be all alone at home.”

“With the greatest pleasure, I assure you, if I did not have to be at home to-night to receive visitors,” replied the young man, mumbling his words and evading Maria Clara’s glance.

“Bring your friends along with you,” replied Captain Tiago cheerfully. “In my house there is always enough to eat. And, besides I would like to have you and Father Dámaso understand each other.”

“There’ll be time enough for that,” replied Ibarra, putting on a forced smile and making ready to accompany the young ladies.

They went downstairs. Maria Clara was walking between Victoria and Iday, while Aunt Isabel followed behind.

As they passed down the street, people stood aside respectfully and gave them the inside of the way. Maria Clara was surprisingly beautiful now. Her paleness had disappeared, and although her eyes were thoughtful, her mouth, on the contrary, seemed all smiles. With that amiability known only to a happy maiden, she saluted friends she had known from childhood who to-day were admirers of her youthful beauty. In less than fifteen days she had regained that frank confidence, that childish chatter, which seemed for awhile to have been left [89]behind in the narrow walls of the convent. It seemed as though the butterfly upon leaving its shell knew all the flowers at once. It was enough that she be given a moment of flight and an opportunity to warm herself in the golden rays of the sun, in order to throw off the rigidity of the chrysalis. New life shone out in every part of her young being. Everything she met with was good and beautiful. Her love was manifested with virginal grace, and innocent in thought, she saw nothing to cause her to put on false blushes. However, she was wont to cover her face with her fan when they joked with her, but her eyes would smile and a gentle tremor would pass over her whole being.

In front of Captain Basilio’s house were some young men who saluted our acquaintances and invited them into the house. The merry voice of Sinang

was heard, as she descended the stairs on a run and at once put an end to all excuses.

“Come up a moment so that I can go out with you,” said she. “It bores me to be among so many strangers who talk about nothing but fighting-cocks and playing cards.”

They went upstairs. The house was full of people. Some advanced to greet Ibarra, whose name was known to all. They contemplated with ecstacy Maria Clara’s beauty, and some of the matrons murmured as they chewed their betel-nut: “She looks like the Virgin!”

After they had partaken of chocolate they resumed their walk. In the corner of the plaza a beggar was singing the romance of the fishes, to the accompaniment of a guitar. He was a common sight, a man miserably dressed and wearing a wide-brimmed hat made out of palm leaves. His clothing consisted of a frock coat covered with patches, and a pair of wide trousers such as the Chinese wear, but torn in many places. From beneath the brim of his hat two fiery orbs flashed out a ray of light. He was tall and from his manner seemed to be young. He put a basket down on the ground and, afterwards walking away from it a little distance, he uttered strange, unintelligible sounds. He remained standing, completely isolated, as if he and the people in the street [90]were trying to avoid each other. Women approached his basket, and dropped into it fish, fruit and rice. When there was no one else to approach the basket, other sadder but less mournful sounds could be heard; perhaps he was thanking them. He picked up his basket and walked away to do the same in another place.
Maria Clara felt that this was a pitiful case. Full of interest, she asked about the strange being.

“It is a leper,” replied Iday. “He contracted the disease some four years ago; some say by taking care of his mother, others by having been confined in a damp prison. He lives there in the field near the Chinese cemetery. He does not communicate with any one: everybody flees from him on account of the fear of contagion. You should see his fantastic little house! The wind, the rain and the sunshine go in and out of it as a needle goes through cloth. They have prohibited him from touching anything belonging to anybody. One day a little child fell into the canal. The canal was deep, but this man happened to be passing near and helped to get the little child out. The

child's father learned of it, made a complaint to the *gobernadorcillo* and the latter ordered that he be given six stripes in the middle of the street, the whip to be afterwards burned. That was atrocious! The leper ran away howling; they pursued him and the*gobernadorcillo* cried out: 'Catch him! One might better be drowned than have that disease!'"

"That is true," murmured Maria Clara. And then, without noticing what she was doing, she went up to the basket of the unfortunate wretch and dropped into it the relic which her father had just presented to her.

"What have you done?" her friends asked her.

"I have nothing else to give him," she replied, concealing the tears in her eyes by a smile.

"And what is he going to do with the relic?" said Victoria to her. "One day they gave him money but he pushed it away from him with his cane. Why would he care for it, if no one would accept anything coming from him? If he could only eat the relic!"

Maria Clara looked longingly at the women who were selling provisions and shrugged her shoulders.[91]
But the leper approached the basket, picked up the piece of jewelry which shone in his hands, knelt down, kissed it, and, after taking off his hat, buried his face in the dust on which the young girl had walked.

Maria Clara hid her face behind her fan and raised her handkerchief to her eyes.[92]
[Contents]

Chapter XVI.
The Hoisting Crane.

While two of the actors were singing the *Incarnatus est* in the church at the celebration of mass on the last day of the *fiesta*, and all were kneeling and the priests were bowing their heads, a man whispered in Ibarra's ear: "During the ceremony of the blessing of the corner stone, do not go near the priest, do not go in the ditch, do not approach the corner stone. Your life will depend on it."

Ibarra looked and saw that it was Elias, the pilot, but, as soon as he had spoken, he lost himself in the crowd.

The yellow-skinned man kept his word. It was not a simple lifting crane which he had built over the ditch for the purpose of lowering the enormous block of granite. It was not the mere tripod which Ñor Juan had wanted for holding a tackle-block. It was something more. It was at the same time a machine and an ornament, grand and imposing.

The confusing and complicated scaffolding had been raised to a height of more than eight meters. Four heavy timbers buried in the ground and supporting each other with colossal, diagonal braces, served as the base. The braces were joined to each other by immense nails, about half driven into the wood, perhaps because the apparatus was only of a provisional nature, and it could then be more easily taken down. Enormous cables were hanging from all sides, giving the entire apparatus an aspect of solidity and grandeur. The top was gay with flags and banners of various colors, floating pennants, and massive garlands of flowers and leaves, all artistically interwoven.

On high, in the shade of the projecting timbers, banners and wreaths, a large three-wheeled tackle-block was suspended by ropes and iron hooks. Over the shining [93]rims of these pulleys great cables passed, holding suspended in the air a massive stone. The center of this stone had been chiseled out so that when lowered upon the hollowed stone, which had already been placed in the ditch, a small enclosure would be formed between the two. This space was to contain an account of the ceremonies, newspapers, manuscripts and coins, to be transmitted, perhaps, to other generations, in

the far distant future. From this tackle-block at the top of the structure, the cable passed down to another smaller pulley which was fastened at the base of the apparatus. Through this pulley, the cable passed to the cylinder of a windlass which was held to the ground by massive beams. This windlass which can be operated by only two hands, multiplies man's strength by means of a series of cog-wheels. Although there is a gain in force, there is of course a loss in velocity.
"Look!" said the yellow-skinned man, as he gave the crank a turn. "Look, Ñor Juan, with my strength alone, I can raise and lower that massive block of stone. This is so nicely arranged that I can control the ascent or descent of the stone by inches. Thus one man below can arrange the two stones in place, while I manipulate the apparatus from here."

Ñor Juan could but admire the man as he smiled in such a peculiar manner. The curious people standing about made comments and praised the yellow-skinned man for his work.

"Who taught you the mechanism?" asked Ñor Juan.

"My father, my father who is now dead," he replied, with that same peculiar smile.

"And who taught your father?"

"Don Saturnino, the grandfather of Don Crisostomo."

"I did not know that Don Saturnino——"

"Oh, he knew a good many things. Not only did he know how to whip well and how to expose his workmen to the rays of the sun, but he knew also how to awaken the sleeping and how to make those awake sleep. In time, you will see what my father has taught me, you will see!"

And the yellow fellow smiled in a strange manner.

At two eating stands, there was now being prepared a sumptuous and abundant breakfast. However, on the [94]table designated for the little ones of the school, there was no wine, but instead a larger amount of fruit. In a covered passage which joined the two stands, there were seats for the musicians and a table covered with sweetmeats, candies and flasks of water, ornamented with leaves and flowers, for the thirsty public.

The crowd, resplendent in gay-colored clothes, was already fleeing from the hot rays of the sun and gathering under the shade of the trees or of the covering. The small boys climbed the trees near the place, in order to get a better view of the ceremony, and looked with envy upon the school children, who, clean and well dressed, were occupying a place designated for them. The fathers of the school children were enthusiastic. They, poor countrymen that they were, would have the pleasure of seeing their children eat on a white table cloth, just like the curate and the *Alcalde*. Merely to think of it was enough to drive away their hunger.

Soon strains of music were heard in the distance. A promiscuous crowd of persons of all ages and dress was preceding the band. The yellow-looking man was uneasy and was examining the whole apparatus. A curious countryman was also following his glances and was observing every movement he made. This countryman was Elias, who had also come to attend the ceremony. His hat and his style of dress almost concealed his identity. He had secured the best possible place for himself, right up close to the crane, on the edge of the excavation.

With the band of music came the *Alcalde*, the officials of the town, the friars, with the exception of Father Dámaso, and the Spanish employees of the Government. Ibarra was conversing with the *Alcalde*, for they had become quite friendly from the time the young man paid him some high compliments on his insignia, decorations and cordon. Pride in belonging to an aristocratic family was a weakness of His Excellency. Captain Tiago, the *alferez* and several wealthy persons, with their shining silk hats, walked along, surrounded by a group of youngsters. Father Salví followed, the same as ever, silent and pensive.

The young man could feel his heart beat as they approached [95]the designated place. Instinctively, he glanced at the strange-looking scaffolding which had been raised there. He saw, too, the yellow-looking man who saluted him with respect, and, for a moment, Ibarra fixed his eyes on him. To his surprise, Ibarra also discovered Elias on the edge of the excavation. He gave the young pilot a significant look, letting him understand that he remembered what he had said in the church.
The curate put on his sacerdotal vestments and began the ceremony. The one-eyed sacristan mayor held the book and a choir boy was charged with

the water-sprinkler and the vessel of blessed water. The others who stood around about, their heads uncovered, maintained a deep silence. In spite of the fact that Father Salví read in a low tone, it could be noticed that his voice trembled.

In the meantime the articles, such as manuscripts, newspapers, medals and coins, which were to be placed in the corner stone had been enclosed in a little glass box, and hermetically sealed in a leaden cylinder.

“Señor Ibarra, do you wish to put the box in its place? The curate awaits it,” said the *Alcalde* to Ibarra.

“I would do so with much pleasure,” replied he, “but I would be usurping the honorable duty of the Señor Notary. The Notary ought to attest the act.”

The Notary took it seriously, descended the carpeted stairs to the bottom of the excavation and, with fitting solemnity, deposited the box in the hollow which had been made in the stone. The curate then took up the sprinkler and sprinkled the stones with holy water.

The time had now come for each one to put his trowelful of mortar on the surface of the stone, which lay in the ditch, so that the other stone might fit upon it and be made to adhere to it.

Ibarra presented the *Alcalde* with a trowel, upon whose wide silver blade was engraved the date. But His Excellency first delivered an address in Spanish.

“Citizens of San Diego,” he said in a solemn tone. “I have the honor to preside at a ceremony the importance of which you already understand. A school is being founded. The school is the base of society. The school is the book in which is written the future of the people. Show me [96]the schools of a people and I will tell you what those people are.
“Citizens of San Diego! Thank God that he has given you virtuous priests; and the Mother Country that she untiringly diffuses her civilization over these fertile islands, protected by her glorious flag. Thank God that she has had pity for you, bringing you these humble priests that they may enlighten you and teach you the divine word. Thank the Government for the great sacrifices it has made, makes now and will make in the future for you and your sons.

“And now that the first stone of this great edifice has been blessed, I, *Alcalde Mayor* of this province, in the name of His Majesty, the King, whom God guard, King of the Spains, in the name of the illustrious Spanish Government, and under its spotless and ever victorious banner, I consecrate this act and begin the building of this school.

“Citizens of San Diego! Long live the King! Long live Spain! Long live the Church! Long live the priests! Long live the Catholic religion!”

“*Viva! Viva!*” replied the others. “Long live the *Alcalde*!”

The *Alcalde* majestically descended to the accompaniment of the music which had begun to play. He placed some trowels of mortar on the stone and with equal majesty ascended the stairs.

The Government employees applauded.

Ibarra offered another silver trowel to the curate, who, after fixing his eyes on him for a moment, descended slowly to the bottom of the excavation. When about half way down the stairs, he raised his eyes to look at the stone which hung suspended in the air by the powerful cables, but he only looked at it for a second and then descended. He did the same as the *Alcalde* had done, but this time more applause was heard, for the Government employees were assisted by the other friars and Captain Tiago.

Father Salví seemed to be searching for some one to whom to hand the trowel. He looked with hesitation toward Maria Clara, but, changing his mind, he offered [97]it to the Notary. The latter, for the sake of gallantry, approached Maria Clara, who declined it with a smile. The friars, the Government employees and the *alferez*, one after another went down and repeated the ceremony. Captain Tiago was not forgotten.
Ibarra had been omitted. He was about to order the yellow man to lower the other stone, when the curate remembered him. In a pleasant tone and, with an affectation of familiarity, he said to him. “Aren’t you going to put on your trowelful, Señor Ibarra?”

“I would be like the fellow who made the stew and then ate it,” replied the young man in the same tone.

“O, go on!” said the *Alcalde*, giving him a gentle push. “If you don’t, I will order them not to lower the stone and then we will have to wait here till Judgment Day.”

So terrible a threat forced Ibarra to obey. He exchanged the small silver trowel for a larger iron one, which made some of the people smile. He advanced quietly and descended the stairs. Elias looked at him with an indescribable expression. If you had seen him, you would have thought that all his life was concentrated in his eyes. The yellow man looked down into the abyss opening at his feet.

Ibarra, after glancing at the stone which hung over his head, and then at Elias and the yellow man, said to Ñor Juan in a trembling voice: “Give me the bucket of mortar and find another trowel for me above.”

The young man stood alone. Elias was no longer looking at him; his eyes instead were riveted on the yellow man’s hand, while the latter leaned over the ditch and followed with anxiety the movements of Ibarra.

The noise of the trowel removing a mass of sand and lime was heard, accompanied by the low murmur of the employees who were congratulating the *Alcalde* on his address.

Suddenly there was a frightful creaking. The pulley which was tied to the base of the crane jumped and then the windlass struck the apparatus like a battering-ram. The timbers swayed, ropes flew into the air and, in a second, all came down with a terrible crash. A cloud of dust was raised, and a thousand cries filled the air. [98]Nearly all fled; a few hurried to the ditch. Only Maria Clara and Father Salví remained in their places without moving, both pale and silent.

When the cloud of dust had partially cleared away, Ibarra could be seen standing among a mass of beams, bamboos, and cables, between the windlass and the massive stone, which in its descent had shaken and crushed everything. The young man was still holding the trowel in his hand, his eyes staring with fright at the dead body of a man which was lying at his feet, half buried under the timbers.

“Are you hurt?—Are you still alive? For God’s sake speak!” said some of the employees, full of terror.

“Miracle! a miracle!” cried some.

“Come and remove the body of this unfortunate man,” said Ibarra, as if awakening from a dream.

On hearing his voice, Maria Clara felt her strength giving way and she fell, half fainting, into the arms of her friends.

Great confusion reigned. Everybody was talking, gesticulating, and running from one side to the other, up and down the stairs, all stupefied and full of consternation.

“Who is the dead man? Is he still alive?” asked the *alferez*.

The body was identified as the yellow workman who had been standing beside the windlass.

“Let proceedings be brought against the superintendent of the work,” was the first thing that the *Alcalde* said.

They examined the body, felt of the heart, but it was no longer beating. The blow had fallen on the head and blood was oozing from the nose, ears and mouth. Some strange marks were seen on the man’s neck. There were four deep dents on one side and a single but deeper one on the other. It looked as though an iron hand had grasped it like a pair of pinchers.

The priests warmly congratulated the young man and shook his hand.

“When I think that only a few moments ago I was standing there,” said one of the employees. “Say! If I had been the last! *Jesús!*”[99]
“It makes my hair stand on end,” said another, who was bald.

Ibarra had departed, to ascertain the condition of Maria Clara.

“Let this not prevent the festival from continuing,” said the *Alcalde*. “God be praised! The dead man is neither a priest nor a Spaniard! Your escape must be celebrated! Just think—if the stone had fallen on you!”

“There is such a thing as a presentiment!” said the Notary. “I said so. Señor Ibarra was reluctant to descend. I saw it!”

“Let the festival go on! Give us some music! Weeping will not bring the dead man to life. Captain, serve warrants right here! Let the clerk of the

tribunal come. Arrest the superintendent of the work!"

"Put him in the stocks!"

"Put him in the stocks! Eh? Some music, music! Put the *maestrillo* in the stocks."

"Señor Alcalde," replied Ibarra gravely, "if weeping cannot bring the dead man back to life, neither can anything be gained by putting a man in prison when we do not know that he is culpable. I will give bail for him and ask that he be given liberty for some days at least."

"Well, well! But such a misfortune must not be repeated!"

All kinds of comments were circulating among the people. The theory that it was a miracle was already accepted. Father Salví, however, seemed to rejoice very little over the miracle, which the people attributed to a saint of his order and of his parish.

There were some who claimed to have seen, as the crane was falling, a figure dressed in black like the Franciscans, go down in the ditch. It was without doubt San Diego himself. It was supposed, too, that Ibarra had heard mass and that the yellow man had not. It was all as clear as the light of the sun.

Ibarra went home to change his clothes.

"Hm! Bad beginning," said Old Tasio as he left the place.

Ibarra had just finished dressing when a servant announced that a countryman was asking for him. Supposing [100]that it was one of his laborers, the young man ordered that they show him into his study, which also served as a library and a chemical laboratory. But, to his great surprise, he met the muscular figure of the mysterious Elias.
"You recently saved my life," said he in Tagalog, at once comprehending Ibarra's movement. "I have paid you only half of the debt, and you are not indebted to me; rather the contrary. I have come to ask a favor of you...."

"Speak out!" replied the young man, in the same language and somewhat surprised at the gravity of the peasant.

For some seconds, Elias looked fixedly into Ibarra's eyes and then replied: "If human justice should ever wish to clear up this mystery, I beg of you not to speak to any one about the warning that I gave you in the church."

"Don't be troubled about that," replied the young man with a certain note of displeasure in his voice. "I know that they are hunting you, but I am no informer."

"Oh, it is not for my sake, it is not for me!" exclaimed Elias, not without some pride. "It is for your sake. I have nothing to fear from men."

Ibarra's surprise increased. The tone in which the countryman was speaking was new to him and did not seem to be in accord either with his state or his fortune.

"What do you mean?" asked Ibarra, interrogating the mysterious man with his look.

"I do not speak in enigmas; I try to express myself clearly. For your greater security, it is necessary that your enemies think you unsuspecting and off your guard."

Ibarra stepped back.

"My enemies? Have I enemies?"

"All of us have, sir, all from the lowest insect to man, from the poorest to the richest and most powerful. Enmity is the law of life. You have enemies in the highest and in the lowest ranks. You are planning a great undertaking; you have a past; your father, your grandfather had enemies because they had passion. In life it is not criminals who provoke the most hatred, but rather honorable men."

"Do you know my enemies?"[101]
Elias did not reply at once, but meditated.

"I knew one, the one who has died," he replied. "Last night I discovered that something was being plotted against you, through some words that were exchanged between him and an unknown man who lost himself in the crowd. 'The fish will not eat this one as they did his father; you will see to-morrow,' said he. These words attracted my attention, not only on account

of their meaning but because they were spoken by this man, who only a few days ago had presented himself to the superintendent of the work with the express desire that he be given charge of the work of placing the corner stone. He did not ask for a large wage, but made a great show of his knowledge. I had no sufficient reasons to attribute evil designs to him, but something told me that my suspicions were right. For this reason, in order to warn you, I chose a moment and an occasion when you could not ask me any questions. You already know the rest."

Elias was then silent for some moments; yet Ibarra did not reply nor utter a word. He was meditating.

"I am sorry that the man is dead," he replied at last. "We might have been able to learn something more about it from him."

"If he had lived he would have escaped from the trembling hand of blind, human justice. God has now judged him! God has killed him! Let God be the only judge!"

Crisostomo looked a moment at the man who was speaking to him in this manner. He noticed that his muscular arms were covered with bruises and black and blue spots.

"Do you also believe in the miracle version of the affair?" he said, smiling —"this miracle of which the people speak?"

"If I believed in miracles, I would not believe in God. I would believe in a deified man. In fact, I would believe that man had created God after his image and likeness," he replied solemnly. "But I believe in Him. More than once I have felt His hand. When all was falling headlong, threatening destruction for everything which was in the [102]place, I Held the criminal. I put myself by his side. He was struck and I am safe and sound."
"You? So that you...?"

"Yes! I held him when he wanted to escape, once he had begun his fatal work. I saw his crime. I say: 'Let God be the only judge among men. Let Him be the only one who has the right to take away life. Let man never think of substituting himself for him!'"

"And, still you this time...."

“No!” interrupted Elias, foreseeing the objection that he was going to raise. “It is not the same thing. When a man as judge condemns another to death or destroys his future forever, he does it with impunity and makes use of the force of other men to carry out his sentence. Yet, after all, the sentence may be wrong and unjust. But I, in exposing the criminal to the same danger which he had prepared for others, ran the same risks. I did not kill him. I allowed the hand of God to kill him.”

“Do you not believe in chance?”

“To believe in chance is like believing in miracles. Both theories suppose that God does not know the future. What is a casualty? A happening which absolutely nobody knows beforehand. What is a miracle? A contradiction, a contortion of the laws of nature. Lack of foresight and contradiction in the All Knowing, who directs the machinery of the world, are two great imperfections.”

“Who are you?” Ibarra asked again, with a certain dread. “Have you studied?”

“I have had to believe in God a great deal because I have lost my faith in men,” replied the pilot, evading the question.

Ibarra thought that he understood this man; young and proscribed, he disregarded human justice; denied the right of man to judge his equals, he protested against power and superiority of certain classes of men over others.

“But you must admit the necessity of human justice, however imperfect it may be,” he replied. “God, although he has ministers on the earth, cannot, that is to say, cannot clearly give his judgment upon the millions of contentions which are stirred up by our passions. It[103]is necessary, it is just, that a man should sometimes judge his fellows.”

“For good, yes; for bad, no. To correct and improve, yes; but not to destroy, for if he fails in his judgment, there is no power that can remedy the evil that has been done. But,” he added, changing his tone, “this discussion is beyond and above me, and I am keeping you from those who are now awaiting you. But do not forget what I have just said: You have enemies. Take care of yourself for the good of your country!”[104]

[Contents]

Chapter XVII.
The Banquet.

There, under the shade of the decorated pavilion, the great men of the province were banqueting. The *Alcalde* occupied one end of the table; Ibarra, the other. On the young man's right sat Maria Clara, and on his left, the Notary. Captain Tiago, the *alferez*, the*gobernadorcillo*, the friars, the employees, and the few señoritas who were present were seated, not according to rank but according to their own fancy.

The banquet was very animated, but, before it was half over, a messenger with a telegram came in search of Captain Tiago. The Captain asked permission to read the message, and naturally all begged of him to do so.

The worthy Captain at first knit his eyebrows; and then raised them. His face became pale, and then brightened up. Doubling up the sheet of paper hurriedly, he arose.

"Gentlemen," said he, confused, "His Excellency, the Governor General, is coming this afternoon to honor my house."

And then he started on a run, taking with him the telegram and the napkin, but not his hat. All sorts of questions and exclamations were shouted after him. The announcement of the coming of the *tulisanes* could not have had a greater effect. "But listen! When does he come? Tell us about it! His Excellency!" But Captain Tiago was already far away.

"His Excellency is coming and will be a guest at Captain Tiago's house!" exclaimed some one, without considering that the Captain's daughter and future son-in-law were present.

"The choice could not have been a better one," replied another.

The friars looked at each other. Their expressions [105]seemed to say: "The Governor General is committing another of his errors, offending us in this way. He ought to be the guest of the convent." But despite the fact that they thought this, they all kept silent and no one of them expressed his opinion.
"Even yesterday he was speaking to me about it," said the *Alcalde*, "but, at that time, His Excellency was not decided."

“Do you know, Your Excellency, Señor Alcalde, how long the Governor General intends to remain here?” asked the *alferez*, a little uneasy.

“No, not positively. His Excellency likes surprises.”

“Here come some other telegrams!”

The messages were for the *Alcalde*, the *alferez*, and the *gobernadorcillo*, and announced the same thing to each of them. The friars noticed that none came addressed to the curate.

“His Excellency will arrive at four o’clock this afternoon, gentlemen,” said the *Alcalde* solemnly. “We can finish at our leisure.”

Leonidas, in the pass of Thermopylæ, could not have said with better grace “To-night we will dine with Pluto.”

“I notice the absence of our great preacher,” said one of the government employees timidly. The speaker had an inoffensive look and before this had not opened his mouth, except to eat, during the entire morning.

All who knew the life of Crisostomo’s father twitched their eyes significantly and seemed to say by their movements: “Go on! It’s a bad beginning that you have made!” But others, more benevolently disposed, replied: “He must be somewhat fatigued.”

“What? Somewhat fatigued!” exclaimed the *alferez*. “Why, he must be exhausted. What did you think of the sermon this morning?”

“Superb, gigantic!” said the Notary.

“To be able to speak like Father Dámaso, a man needs lungs,” observed Father Manuel Martin.

The Augustine did not concede more than lung power.

“And such easiness of expression,” added Father Salví.

“Do you know that Señor Ibarra has the best cook in the [106]province,” remarked the *Alcalde*, cutting off the conversation.
“So they say,” replied one of the Government employees, “but his fair neighbor does not wish to do honor to his table, for she scarcely takes a mouthful.”

Maria Clara blushed.

“I thank you, Senor.... You occupy yourself too much about me ... but ...” she said timidly.

“But your presence honors him sufficiently,” concluded the gallant *Alcalde*. Then turning to Father Salví: “Father Curate, I notice that you have been silent and pensive all day long.”

“It is my nature,” muttered the Franciscan. “I would rather listen than talk.”

“Your Reverence seeks always to gain and never to lose,” replied the *alferez*, in a joking manner.

But Father Salví did not take it as a joke. His eyes flashed a moment and he replied: “You know very well, Señor Alferez, that, during these days, I am not the one who gains most!”

The *alferez* overlooked the fling with a false laugh and pretended not to hear it.

“But, gentlemen, I do not understand how you can be talking about gains and losses,” intervened the *Alcalde*. “What will these amiable and discreet young women, who honor us with their presence, think of us? To my mind, the young women are like Æolian harps in the night. It is only necessary to lend an attentive ear to hear them, for their unspeakable harmonies elevate the soul to the celestial spheres of the infinite and of the ideal....”

“Your Excellency is a poet,” said the Notary gayly; and both drained their wine glasses.

“I cannot help it,” said the *Alcalde*, wiping his lips. “The occasion, if it does not always make the thief, makes the poet. In my youth I composed verses, and they certainly were not bad ones.”

“So Your Excellency has been unfaithful to the Muses, deserting them for Themis.”

“Psh!” What would you do? It has always been my dream to run through the whole social scale. Yesterday I was gathering flowers, and singing songs; to-day I hold [107]the wand of Justice and serve Humanity. To-morrow....”

“To-morrow Your Excellency will throw the wand into the fire to warm yourself with it in the winter of life, and will then take a portfolio in the Ministry,” added Father Sibyla.

“Psh! Yes ... no.... To be a Minister is not precisely my ideal. The unexpected always happens, though. A little villa in the north of Spain to pass the summer in, a mansion in Madrid, and some possessions in Andalusia for the winter.... We will live remembering our dear Philippines.... Of me Voltaire will not say: ‘*Nous n’avons jamais été chez ces peuples que pour nous y enrichir et pour les calomnier.*’”

The Government employees thought that His Excellency intended a joke and they began to laugh to make a show of appreciating it. The friars imitated them since they did not know that Voltaire was the Volta-i-ré whom they had so often cursed and condemned to Hades. Father Sibyla, however, recognized the name and assumed a serious air, supposing that the *Alcalde* had uttered some heresy.

Father Dámaso was waddling down the road. He was half smiling, but in such a malignant manner, that on seeing him, Ibarra, who was in the act of speaking, lost the thread of his remarks. All were surprised to see Father Dámaso, but, excepting Ibarra, they greeted him with marks of pleasure. They had already reached the last course of the dinner, and the champagne was foaming in the glasses.

Father Dámaso showed a little nervousness in his smile when he saw Maria Clara seated on the right of Crisostomo. But, taking a chair by the side of the *Alcalde*, he asked in the midst of a significant silence: “Were you not talking about something, señores? Continue!”

“We were drinking a toast,” replied the *Alcalde*. “Señor Ibarra was mentioning those who had aided him in his philanthropic enterprise and was speaking of the architect when Your Reverence....”

“Well, I don’t understand architecture,” interrupted Father Dámaso, “but architects and the dunces who go to them make me laugh! You have an example right here. I drew the plan for a church and it has been constructed [108]perfectly: so an English jeweler who was one day a guest at the convent told me. To draught a plan, one need have but a small degree of intelligence.”

“However,” replied the *Alcalde*, seeing that Ibarra was silent, “when we are dealing with certain edifices, for example a school, we need a skilled man (*perito*).”

“He who needs a *perito* is a *perrito* (little dog)!” exclaimed Father Dámaso, with a scoff. “One would have to be more of a brute than the natives, who erect their own houses, if he did not know how to build four walls and put a covering over them. That’s all that a school house is.”

All looked toward Ibarra. But the young man, even if he did look pale, kept on conversing with Maria Clara.

“But Your Reverence should consider....”

“Just look you,” continued the Franciscan without allowing the *Alcalde* to speak. “See how one of our lay brothers, the most stupid one we have, has built a good hospital, handsome and cheap. It is well built and he did not pay more than eight *cuartos* a day to those whom he employed even those who came from other towns. That fellow knows how to treat them. He does not do like many fools and*mesticillos*1 who spoil them by paying them three or four *reales*.”

“Does Your Reverence say that he only paid eight *cuartos*? Impossible!” said the *Alcalde*, trying to change the course of the conversation.

“Yes, Señor; and those who brag of being good Spaniards ought to imitate him. You can see very well now, since the Suez Canal was opened, corruption has come here. Before, when we had to double the Cape, there were not so many worthless people coming out here, nor did Filipinos go abroad to be corrupted and spoiled.”

“But, Father Dámaso!”

“You know very well what the native is. As quickly as he learns anything, he goes and becomes a doctor. All these ignoramuses who go to Europe....”

“But listen, Your Reverence ...” interrupted the *Alcalde*, becoming uneasy at such harsh words.

“They are all going to end as they merit,” he continued. [109]“The hand of God is upon them and one must be blind not to see it. Even in this life, the

fathers of such vipers receive their punishment.... They die in prison, eh?"
But he did not finish his remarks. Ibarra, his face flushing, had been following him with his eyes. On hearing the allusion to his father, he rose and, with a single bound, brought down his strong hand on the head of the priest. Stunned with the blow, the friar fell on his back.

Full of astonishment and terror, no one dared to intervene.

"Keep back!" cried the young man, with a menacing voice, and brandishing a sharp knife in his hand. In the meantime, he held the friar down with his foot on his neck. The latter was recovering consciousness. "Let no one approach who does not want to die!"

Ibarra was beside himself. His body trembled, and his threatening eyes almost burst from their sockets. Friar Dámaso struggled and raised himself, but the young man, seizing him by the collar, shook him till he fell on his knees and collapsed.

"Señor Ibarra! Señor Ibarra!" cried some.

But nobody, not even the *alferez*, dared to approach the glistening blade, considering the strength of the young man and the state of his mind. All were paralyzed.

"All of you people here have said nothing! Now the matter concerns me! I have avoided him. God now brings him to me. Let God judge!"

The young man was breathing hard. With iron hand he held the Franciscan down, and the latter struggled in vain to break loose.

"My heart beats tranquilly. My hand is sure."

He looked about him and continued: "Is there among you any one who does not love his father; any one who hates his memory, any one who was born in disgrace and humiliation? See! Do you observe this silence? Priest of a peaceful God, with your mouth full of sanctity and religion, and a miserable heart, you could not have known what a father is. You should have thought of your own! [110]Do you see? Among this crowd which you scorn, there is none such as you! You are judged!"
The people around him made a stir, believing that he was going to strike.

“Back!” he again cried in a threatening voice. “What? Do you fear that I would soil my hand with his impure blood? Have I not told you that my heart beats tranquilly? Back from us, all! Listen, priests, judges, you who think yourselves different from other men, and who claim other rights for yourselves! Listen! My father was an honorable man. Ask these people who venerate his memory. My father was a good citizen. He sacrificed himself for me and for the good of his country! His house was open. His table was ready for the stranger or the exile who came to it in his misery. He was a good Christian; he always did what was right. He never oppressed the helpless, nor brought sorrow to the miserable and wretched. To this man, he opened the door of his house. He had him sit at his table and he called him his friend. What has he done in return? He has calumniated him, persecuted him, has armed ignorance against him, violating the sanctity of his office, has thrown him out of his tomb, dishonored his memory, and persecuted him even in death’s repose. And not content with that, he now persecutes his son. I have fled from him, I have avoided his presence. You heard him this morning profane the pulpit; you saw him point me out to the popular fanaticism; I said nothing. Now he comes here in search of a quarrel. To your surprise, I suffered in silence; but he again insults the sacred memory of my father, that memory which every son holds dear.... You who are here, you priests, you judges, have you seen your father watching over you night and day and working for you? Have you seen him deprive himself of you for your good? Have you seen your father die in prison, heart broken, sighing for some one to caress him, searching for some being to console him, alone in sickness, while you were in a foreign land? Have you heard his name dishonored afterward? Have you found his tomb vacant when you wished to pray upon it? No? You are silent. Then by that silence you condemn him!”[111]

He raised his arm; but a young maiden, quick as a flash, put herself between them and with her delicate hands stopped the arm of the avenger. It was Maria Clara.

Ibarra looked at her with an expression that seemed to reflect madness. Gradually, he loosened the vise-like fingers of his hand, allowed the body of the Franciscan to fall, and dropped his knife upon the ground. Covering his face, he fled through the crowd.[112]

[1]Little *mestizos* or half breeds. Used in contempt.

[Contents]

Chapter XVIII.
The First Cloud.

The house of Captain Tiago was no less disturbed than the imagination of the people. Maria Clara, refusing to listen to the consolation of her aunt and foster sister, did nothing but weep. Her father had forbidden her to speak to Ibarra until the priests should absolve him from the excommunication which they had pronounced upon him.

Captain Tiago, though very busy preparing his house for the reception of the Governor General, had been summoned to the convent.

“Don’t cry, my girl,” said Aunt Isabel as she dusted off the mirrors. “They will certainly annul the excommunication; they will write the Pope.... We will make a large donation.... Father Dámaso had nothing more than a fainting spell.... He is not dead.”

“Don’t cry,” said Andeng to her, in a low voice. “I will certainly arrange it so that you can speak to him. What are the confessionals made for, if we are not expected to sin? Everything is pardoned when one has told it to the curate.”

Finally, Captain Tiago arrived. They scanned his face for an answer to their many questions, but his expression announced too plainly his dismay. The poor man was sweating, and passing his hand over his forehead. He seemed unable to utter a word.

“How is it, Santiago?” asked Aunt Isabel, anxiously.

He answered her with a sigh and dried away a tear.

“For God’s sake, speak! What has happened?”

“What I had already feared!” he broke out finally half crying. “All is lost! Father Dámaso orders that the engagement be broken. If it is not broken off, I am condemned in this life and in the next. They all tell me the same thing, even Father Sibyla! I ought to shut the[113]doors of my house and ... I owe him more than fifty thousand *pesos*. I told the Fathers so, but they would take no notice of it. ‘Which do you prefer to lose,’ they said to me, ‘fifty

thousand *pesos*, or your life and your soul?' Alas! *Ay! San Antonio!* If I had known it, if I had known it!"
Maria Clara was sobbing.

"Do not cry, my daughter," he added, turning to her. "You are not like your mother. She never cried ... she never cried except when she was whimsical just before your birth.... Father Dámaso tells me that a relative of his has just arrived from Spain ... and that he wants him to be your fiancé."...

Maria Clara stopped up her ears.

"But, Santiago, are you out of your head?" cried Aunt Isabel. "Speak to her now of another fiancé! Do you think that your daughter can change lovers as easily as she changes her dress?"

"I was thinking the same thing, Isabel. Don Crisostomo is rich.... The Spaniards only marry for love of money.... But what would you have me do? They have threatened me with excommunication. They say that I am in great peril: not only my soul, but also my body ... my body, do you hear? My body!"

"But you only give sorrow to your daughter. Are you not a friend of the Archbishop? Why don't you write him?"

"The Archbishop is also a friar. The Archbishop does only what the friars say. But, Maria, do not cry. The Governor General will come. He will want to see you and your eyes are all inflamed.... Alas! I was thinking what a happy afternoon I was going to pass.... Without this misfortune, I would be the happiest of men and all would envy me.... Calm yourself, my girl. I am more unfortunate than you and I do not cry. You can have another and better fiancé, but I lose fifty thousand *pesos*. Ah! Virgin of Antipolo! If I could only have some luck to-night!"

Noises, detonations, the rumbling of carriages, the galloping of horses, and a band playing the *Marcha Real* announced the arrival of His Excellency, the Governor [114]General of the Philippine Islands. Maria Clara ran to hide in her bedroom.... Poor girl! Gross hands were playing with her heart, ignorant of the delicacy of its fibers.
In the meantime, the house filled with people. Loud steps, commands, and the clanking of sabers and swords resounded on all sides. The afflicted

maiden was half kneeling before an engraving of the Virgin, a picture representing her in that attitude of painful solitude, known only to Delaroche, as if she had been surprised on returning from the sepulchre of her Son. But Maria Clara was not thinking of the grief of that Mother; she was thinking of her own. With her head resting on her breast and her hands on the floor, she looked like a lily bent by the storm. A future, cherished for years in her dreams; a future whose illusions, born in her infancy and nursed through her youth, gave form to the cells of her being—that future was now to be blotted from the mind and heart by a single word!

Maria Clara was as good and as pious a Christian as her aunt. The thought of an excommunication terrified her. The threat to destroy the peace of her father demanded that she sacrifice her love. She felt the entire strength of that affection which until now she had not known. It was like a river which glides along smoothly; its banks carpeted with fragrant flowers, its bed formed by fine sand, the wind scarcely rippling its surface, so quiet and peaceful that you would say that its waters were dead; until suddenly its channel is pent up, ragged rocks obstruct its course, and the entangled trunks of trees form a dike. Then the river roars; it rises up; its waves boil; it is lashed into foam, beats against the rocks and rushes into the abyss.

She wanted to pray, but who can pray without hope? One prays when there is hope. When there is none, we surrender ourselves to God and wail. “My God!” cried her heart, “why shouldst thou separate me thus from him I love? Why deny me the love of others? Thou dost not deny me the sun, nor the air, nor dost thou hide the heavens from my sight. Why dost thou deny me love, when it is possible to live without sun, without air, and without the heavens, but without love, never?”[115]
“Mother, mother,” she was moaning.

Aunt Isabel came to take her from her grief. Some of her girl friends had arrived and the Governor General also desired to talk with her.

“Aunt, tell them that I am ill!” begged the frightened maiden. “They wish to make me play the piano and sing.”

“Your father has promised it. You are not going to go back on your father?”

Maria Clara arose, looked at her aunt, clasped her beautiful arms about her and murmured: “Oh, if I had ...”

But, without finishing the sentence, she dried her tears and began to make her toilet.[116]
[Contents]

Chapter XIX.
His Excellency.

“I want to speak with that young man,” said His Excellency to an adjutant. “He has awakened my interest.”

“They have already gone to look for him, General! But there is a young man here from Manila who insists on being introduced. We have told him that Your Excellency has no time and that you have not come to give audiences, but to see the town and the procession. But he has replied that Your Excellency always has time to dispense justice.”

His Excellency turned to the *Alcalde* as if in doubt.

“If I am not mistaken,” said the latter, making a slight bow, “it is a young man who this morning had a difficulty with Father Dámaso about the sermon.”

“Still another? Has this friar undertaken to disturb the province, or does he think that he is in command here? Tell the young man to come in!”

His Excellency was walking nervously from one end of the *sala* to the other.

In the lower part of the house, in the ante-room, were several Spaniards, mingled with army officers and officials of the town of San Diego and some of the neighboring villages. They were grouped in little circles and were conversing about one thing and another. All of the friars were there except Father Dámaso, and they wanted to go in and pay their respects to His Excellency.

“His Excellency, the Governor General, begs Your Reverences to wait a moment,” said the adjutant. “Walk in, young man!”

The young man from Manila entered the *sala*, pale and trembling.

Everybody was surprised. His Excellency must be irritated to dare to make the friars wait. Father Sibyla [117]said: “I have nothing to say to him.... I am losing time here!”
“It’s the same with me,” said an Augustine. “Shall we go?”

“Would it not be better for us to find out what he thinks?” asked Father Salví. “We would avoid a scandal ... and ... we would be able to call to his mind his duty to ... the Church.”

“Your Reverences can walk in, if you wish,” announced the adjutant, as he escorted out the young man, whose face was now, however, glowing with satisfaction.

Friar Sibyla entered first. Behind him came Father Salví, Father Manuel Martin and the other priests. They all humbly saluted the Governor General, with the exception of Father Sibyla, who preserved even in his bow, an air of superiority. Father Salví, on the contrary, almost touched the floor with his head.

“Which of Your Reverences is Father Dámaso?” asked His Excellency unexpectedly, without having them sit down, or even asking about their health, and without addressing them with any of those courteous phrases which are customary with such high personages.

“Father Dámaso is not among us, señor,” replied Father Sibyla, rather dryly.

“Your Excellency’s servant lies ill in bed,” added Father Salví meekly. “After having the pleasure of saluting you and of inquiring about the health of Your Excellency, as befits all the good servants of the King and all persons of good education, we also come in the name of the respectful servant of Your Excellency who has the misfortune....”

“Oh,” interrupted the Governor General, as he turned a chair around on one leg and smiled nervously. “If all the servants of My Excellency were like His Reverence Father Dámaso, I would prefer to serve My Excellency myself.”

The Reverences did not know how to respond to this interruption.

“Take a seat, Your Reverences!” he added after a short pause, softening his tone a little.

Captain Tiago came in dressed in a frock coat and walking [118]on tip-toes. He was leading Maria Clara by the hand. The young maiden was trembling when she entered, but notwithstanding she made a graceful and ceremonious bow.

“Is this your daughter?” asked the Governor General, somewhat surprised.

“And Your Excellency’s, my General,” replied Captain Tiago seriously.1

The *Alcalde* and the adjutants opened wide their eyes, but His Excellency did not lose his gravity. He extended his hand to the young maiden and said to her affably: “Happy are the fathers who have daughters like you, señorita. They have spoken to me about you with respect and consideration.... I have desired to see you and to thank you for your pretty deed of to-day. I am informed of all, and when I write to His Majesty’s Government I will not forget your generous conduct. In the meantime, señorita, allow me in the name of His Majesty the King whom I represent here and who loves to see peace and tranquillity among his subjects, and in my own name, that of a father who also has daughters of your age, allow me to extend to you most sincere thanks and propose your name for some mark of recognition.”

“Señor ...” replied Maria Clara, trembling.

His Excellency guessed what she wanted to say, and replied: “It is well enough, señorita, that you are satisfied in your own conscience with the mere esteem of your own people. The testimony of one’s people is the highest reward and we ought not to ask more. But, however, I will not let pass this excellent opportunity to show you that, if justice knows how to punish, she also knows how to reward and is not always blind.”

“Señor Don Juan Crisostomo awaits Your Excellency’s orders,” announced the adjutant in a loud voice.

Maria Clara trembled.

“Ah!” exclaimed the Governor General. “Permit me, señorita, to express the desire to see you again before I leave town. I still have some very important things to say to you. Señor *Alcalde*, Your Lordship will accompany [119]me for a walk after the conference which I will hold alone with Señor Ibarra.”
“Your Excellency will permit us,” said Father Salví meekly, “to inform you that Señor Ibarra is excommunicated ...”

His Excellency interrupted him saying: “I am glad that I have nothing more to deplore than the condition of Father Dámaso, for whom I sincerely wish

a complete recovery, because at his age a voyage to Spain for his health would not be pleasant. But this depends on him ... and in the meantime, may God preserve the health of Your Reverences."

They retired one after the other.

"We will see who will make the journey first," said a Franciscan.

"I am going off now right away!" said Father Sibyla, with indignation.

"And we are going back to our provinces, too," said the Augustins.

They could not endure that through the fault of a Franciscan His Excellency had received them coldly.

In the entrance hall they met Ibarra, their host only a few hours ago. They exchanged no salutations, but their looks were eloquent.

The *Alcalde*, on the contrary, when the friars had disappeared, greeted the young man and extended his hand to him in a familiar way. But the arrival of the adjutant, who was looking for Ibarra, did not give them an opportunity to converse.

Ibarra was dressed in deep mourning. He presented himself in a calm manner, and bowed profoundly, despite the fact that the sight of the friars had not seemed a good omen for him.

The Governor General advanced a few steps. "It gives me great satisfaction to shake your hand. Grant me your entire confidence."

"Señor ... such kindness...!"

"Your surprise offends me. It indicates that you did not expect a good reception from me. That is doubting my justice!"[120]
"A friendly reception, señor, for an insignificant subject like myself, is not justice, it is a favor."

"Well, well!" said His Excellency, sitting down and pointing out a seat for Ibarra. "Let us speak frankly. I am very much pleased with your action and I have already proposed to His Majesty's Government that they grant you an insignia for your philanthropic intention of erecting a school.... If you had

asked me, I would have attended the ceremony with a great deal of pleasure and perhaps the unpleasantness would have been avoided."

"My idea of erecting a school seems to me so insignificant," replied the young man, "that I did not think it an occasion worthy of taking the attention of Your Excellency from your many duties and cares. Then, too, it was my duty to first address the highest authority of the province."

His Excellency made a bow of satisfaction and adopting a still more intimate manner, continued:

"In regard to the unpleasantness which you have had with Father Dámaso, have no fear nor regret. I will not touch a hair of your head while I govern these Islands. And in regard to the excommunication, I will speak to the Archbishop, for it is necessary for us to adapt ourselves to circumstances. Here, we cannot laugh about these things in public as we do in Spain or in cultured Europe. Nevertheless, be more prudent in the future. You have put yourself in opposition to the religious corporations, which, on account of your position and wealth, need to be respected. But I will protect you, because I like good sons, I like to see a person respect the honor of his father. I, too, love my father, and as sure as there is a God, I know what I would have done had I been in your place...."

And quickly turning the conversation, he asked: "You have told me that you come from Europe; were you in Madrid?"

"Yes, señor; for some months."

"You have perhaps heard of my family?"

"Your Excellency had just left when I had the honor to be presented to it."[121]
"And why, then, did you come here without bringing some letter of introduction?"

"Señor," replied Ibarra bowing, "because I do not come directly from Spain, and because, having heard of Your Excellency's character, I thought that a letter of introduction would not only be useless, but even offensive. All Filipinos are recommended to you."

A smile appeared on the lips of the old officer and he replied slowly, as if weighing and measuring his words:

“It flatters me to learn that you think so ... and ... so it ought to be. However, young man, you ought to know what loads we bear upon our shoulders here in the Philippines. Here, we, old army officers, have to do and be everything: King, Secretary of State, of War, of Agriculture, of Internal Affairs and of Justice. The worst part of it is the fact that in regard to everything we have to consult our distant Mother Country, which approves or rejects our propositions, according to circumstances, sometimes blindly. And you know how we Spaniards say: ‘Grasp much, get little.’ Then, too, we come here ignorant of the country and we leave it as soon as we begin to know it. With you I can be frank, for it would be useless to appear otherwise. In Spain, where each branch of the Government has its own Minister, born and brought up in the country, where they have the press and public opinion, the opposition is open and before the eyes of the Government, and shows up its faults; yet, even there, all is imperfect and defective. And when you consider the conditions here, it is a wonder that all is not upset, with all those advantages lacking, and with the opposition working in the dark. Good intentions and wishes are not wanting in us governing officials, but we find ourselves obliged to make use of eyes and arms which frequently we do not know, and which, perhaps, instead of serving the country, serve only their own interests. That is not our fault; it is the fault of circumstances. You arouse my interest and I do not want our present system of government to prejudice you in any way. I cannot watch everything, nor can I attend to all. Can I be useful to you in any way? Have you anything to request?”

Ibarra meditated.[122]
“Señor,” he replied, “my greatest desire is the happiness of my country, a happiness due to the efforts of our Mother Country and to the efforts of my fellow countrymen, united with the eternal bonds of a common interest and common object. What I ask the Government can only give after many years of continuous work and proper reforms.”

His Excellency looked at him for several seconds with a look which Ibarra met naturally, without timidity and without boldness.

“You are the first *man* with whom I have spoken in this country,” he exclaimed grasping his hand.

“Your Excellency has only seen those who lead a grovelling existence in the city. You have not seen the calumniated hovels of our towns. If you had, you would have seen true men, if generous hearts and simple manners make true men.”

The Governor General arose and paced the *sala* from one side to the other.

“Señor Ibarra,” he exclaimed, stopping a moment. The young man arose. “I will probably leave here within a month. Your education and your mode of thinking are not for this country. Sell what you possess, get your trunk ready and come with me to Europe. That climate will be better for you.”

“I shall cherish all my life the memory of Your Excellency’s kindness,” replied Ibarra, moved by what the Governor General had said. “But I ought to live in the country where my fathers have lived....”

“Where they have died, you should say, to speak more exactly. Believe me! I possibly know your country better than you do yourself.... Ah! Now I remember,” he exclaimed changing the tone of his voice. “You are going to marry a lovely girl and I am keeping you here! Go, go to her side, and that you may have greater liberty send her father to me,” he added, smiling. “Do not forget, however, that I want you to accompany me for a walk.”

Ibarra bowed and departed.

His Excellency called his adjutant.

“I am happy,” said he, giving him a light slap on the shoulder. “To-day I have seen for the first time how one [123]can be a good Spaniard without ceasing to be a good Filipino and to love his country. To-day, at last, I have shown the *Reverences* that we are not all their playthings. This young man has afforded me the opportunity, and, in a short time, I will have settled all of my accounts with the friar. It’s a pity that this young man, some day or other ... but call the *Alcalde* to me.”
The latter presented himself at once.

“Señor Alcalde,” he said to him, as he entered the room, “in order to avoid a repetition of scenes such as Your Honor witnessed this afternoon, scenes

which I deplore because they take away the prestige of the Government and all Spaniards, I want to commend to you warmly Señor Ibarra, that you may not only aid him in carrying out his patriotic ends, but also prevent in the future any person of whatever class or under whatever pretext, from molesting him."

The *Alcalde* understood the reprimand and bowed to conceal his confusion.

"Have the *alferez*, who is in command here, informed to the same effect. And you will find out if it is true that this officer has methods of procedure that are not in accordance with the regulations. I have heard more than one complaint on this score."

Captain Tiago, all starched and ironed, presented himself.

"Don Santiago," said His Excellency, in a cordial tone of voice, "a little while ago I was congratulating you on having a daughter like the Señorita de los Santos. Now I want to congratulate you on your future son-in-law. The most virtuous of daughters is certainly worthy of the best citizen of the Philippines. Is the date of the wedding known?"

"Señor!" stammered the Captain, wiping away the perspiration which was running down his face.

"O, come! I see that there is nothing definite. If you need godfathers, I will be one of them with the greatest pleasure. I would do it to take away the bad taste which so many of the weddings which I have attended here have left in my mouth," he added, turning to the*Alcalde*.[124]
"Yes, señor!" replied Captain Tiago, with a smile which inspired compassion.

Ibarra had gone in search of Maria Clara, almost on a run. He had so many things to tell her. He heard some gentle voices in one of the rooms and knocked at the door.

"Who knocks?" asked Maria Clara.

The voices were silenced and the door ... was not opened.

"It is I. May I come in?" asked the young man, his heart beating violently.

The silence was not broken. A few seconds afterward gentle steps approached the door and Sinang's cheerful voice murmured through the key-hole: "Crisostomo, we are going to the theatre to-night. Write what you have to say to Maria Clara."

Then the footsteps were heard retreating, as quickly as they had come.

"What does that mean!" murmured Ibarra to himself, as he went slowly away from the door.[125]

1A reply which accords with the Spanish idea of politeness but rather ludicrously used in this instance.

[Contents]

Chapter XX.
The Procession.

In the evening, by the light of lanterns hung from windows, to the ringing of bells and bursting of bombs, the procession started for the fourth time.

The Governor General left the house on foot, in company with his two adjutants, Captain Tiago, the *Alcalde*, the *alferez*, and Ibarra. The Civil Guards and the officials of the town preceded them and cleared the way. His Excellency had been invited to witness the procession from the house of the *gobernadorcillo*, in front of which a platform had been erected for the recitation of a *loa*, or religious poem, in honor of the Patron Saint. Ibarra had previously declined with pleasure an invitation to hear this poetical composition, as he had preferred to witness the procession from the house of Captain Tiago with Maria Clara and her friends. But, as His Excellency wished to hear the *loa*, there was no other remedy for Ibarra but to console himself with the hope of seeing her at the theatre.

The procession was headed by three sacristans carrying silver candlesticks. The children of the school, accompanied by their teacher, followed. Then came the small boys, with colored paper lanterns fastened to the ends of pieces of bamboo, each more or less adorned according to the caprices of the boy, for this part of the illumination was paid for entirely by themselves. However, they fulfilled this duty with a great deal of pleasure.

In the midst of it all, men serving as police, passed to and fro to see that the files of the procession were not broken or the people jammed together in a crowd. For this purpose they used their wands and inflicted some hard blows, thus managing to add to the brilliancy of the procession, to the edification of souls and to the glory of religious pomp.[126]
At the same time that the officers inflicted these sanctified floggings with their wands free of charge, others, to console those who had been punished, distributed wax and tallow candles, also free of charge.

“Señor Alcalde,” said Ibarra, in a low voice, “do they inflict those blows to punish the sinners or merely for pleasure?”

“You are right, Señor Ibarra,” replied the Governor General, who had overheard his question. “This spectacle ... barbarous ... astonishing to those who come from other countries, ought to be prohibited.”

Although it cannot be explained, the first saint who appeared was San Juan el Baptisto. On seeing him, you would say that the cousin of Our Saviour did not enjoy any great renown among these people. He had slender feet and legs and the face of a hermit, and was carried along on an old wooden litter. In marked contrast to the representation of San Juan, was that of San Francisco, the founder of the great order. The latter was drawn in a car, and, as Tasio said: “What a car! How many lights and glass lanterns! Why, I have never seen you surrounded by so many illuminations, Giovanni Bernardone! And what music!”

Behind the music came a standard representing the same saint, but with seven wings. It was carried by the brothers of the Third Order, dressed in *guingon* and praying in a loud and mournful voice. The next in the procession was Santa Maria Magdalena, a most beautiful image with an abundant growth of hair, a handkerchief of embroidered *piña* cloth between her ring-covered fingers, and wearing a dress of silk adorned with gold-leaf. Lights and incense surrounded her. The glass tears from her eyes reflected the colors of the colored fire which was burned here and there, giving a fantastic aspect to the procession. Consequently, the sinful saint appeared to be weeping now green, now red and now blue tears. The people did not begin to burn these colored lights till San Francisco was passing; San Juan el Baptisto did not enjoy this honor, passing by quickly, ashamed perhaps to go dressed in skins among so many saints covered with gold and precious jewels.[127]

“There goes our saint!” cried the daughter of the *gobernadorcillo* to her visitors. “I loaned her my rings, but I did it to get to Heaven.”

Those carrying the illuminations stopped near the platform to hear the *loa*. The saints did the same. They and their carriers wanted to hear the verses. Those who carried San Juan, tired of waiting, squatted down in the characteristic Filipino manner, and found it convenient to leave their burden on the ground.

“You’ll get into trouble,” objected one.

"*Jesús!* In the sacristy, they leave him in a corner among spider-webs...."

After Magdalena came the women. They differed from the men in arrangement. Instead of the children, the old women came first and finally the unmarried women. Behind these came the car of the Virgin, and behind that, the curate under his canopy. Father Dámaso gave the following reason for putting the young women next to the Virgin's car: "The Virgin likes young women, but not old ones." Of course, this explanation caused many of the older women to make wry faces, but that did not change the taste of the Virgin.

San Diego followed Magdalena, but he did not seem to rejoice over the fact, for he was as precise in his behavior as on the morning when he followed along behind San Francisco. Six brothers of the Third Order drew the car. San Diego stopped before the platform and awaited for the people to salute him.

But it was necessary to await the car which contained the image of the Virgin. Preceding this car were some people dressed in a fantastic manner which made children cry and babies scream. In the midst of that dark mass of habits, hoods and girdles, to the sound of that monotonous and nasal prayer, one could see, like white jessamine, like fresh pansies among old rags, twelve young lassies dressed in white, crowned with flowers, with hair curled and eyes bright as the necklaces they wore. Seizing hold of two wide blue bands which were tied to the car of the Virgin, they drew it along, reminding one of doves drawing the car of Spring.

And now when the images were all attentive, when this [128]child and that had been slapped sufficiently to make him listen to the verses, when everybody had his eyes fixed on the half open curtain, at last, an *aaaah!* of admiration escaped from the lips of all.
And the sight merited it. A young child appeared with wings, riding boots, a cordon over its shoulder, a belt and a plumed hat.

"The Señor Alcalde!" cried some one, but the young prodigy recited a poem in such a manner that the *Alcalde* was not offended at the comparison.

The procession then continued. San Juan followed out his bitter career.

As the Virgin passed before the house of Captain Tiago, a heavenly song greeted her like the words of an archangel. It was a sweet, melodious, supplicating voice, weeping the *Ave Maria* of Gounod. The music of the procession was silenced, the praying ceased, and Father Salví himself stopped. The voice trembled and brought tears to the cheeks of those who heard it. That voice expressed more than a salutation, a prayer, or a plaint.

From the window, where he was viewing the procession, Ibarra heard the voice, and melancholy took possession of his heart. He understood what that soul was suffering and what was expressed in that song. He was afraid to think of the cause of that grief.

The Governor General found him pensive and sad.[129]
[Contents]

Chapter XXI.
Doña Consolacion.

Why were the windows in the *alferez's* house closed? Where was the masculine face and the flannel shirt of the Medusa or Muse of the Civil Guard while the procession was passing? Could she have understood how unpleasant was the sight of the swelling veins of her forehead, filled, it seemed, not with blood but with vinegar and bile; of her large cigar, that worthy ornament of her red lips; and of her envious look; could she have understood all of that, and, giving way to a generous impulse, have refrained from disturbing the gayety of the crowd by her sinister apparition?

Alas! Her generous impulses lived only in the golden age.

Her house was sad because other people were merry, as Sinang put it. There neither lanterns nor flags could be seen. In fact, if the sentry were not walking up and down in front of the gate, you would have said that the house was unoccupied.

A feeble light illumined the disarranged *sala*, and made transparent the oyster-shell windows filled with spider-webs and covered with dust. The Señora, according to her custom, her hands folded, sat in a wide arm-chair. She was dressed the same as every day, that is to say, outrageously out of taste. In detail, she had a handkerchief tied around her head, while short, slender locks of tangled hair hung down on either side; a blue flannel shirt over another shirt which should have been white; and a faded-out skirt which moulded itself to her slender thighs as she sat with her legs crossed and nervously wiggled her foot. From her mouth, came big puffs of smoke, which she fastidiously blew up in the space toward which she looked when her eyes were open.[130]

That morning the Señora had not heard mass, not because she had not cared to hear it, for on the contrary she wanted to show herself to the multitude and to hear the sermon, but because her husband had not permitted her to do so. As was usually the case, his prohibition was accompanied by two or three insults, oaths and threats of kicking. The *alferez* understood that his "female" dressed herself in a ridiculous manner, and that it was not fitting to expose her to the eyes of the people from the capital nor even the country districts.

But she did not understand it that way. She knew that she was beautiful, attractive, that she had the manners of a queen and that she dressed much better and more gorgeously than Maria Clara herself, though to be sure the latter wore a *tapis* over her skirt while she wore only the skirt. The *alferez* had to say to her: "Oh, shut your mouth or I'll kick you till you do!"

Doña Consolacion did not care to be kicked, but she planned revenge.

The dark face of the Señora never had inspired confidence in anybody, not even when she painted it. That morning she was exceptionally uneasy, and as she walked from one end of the *sala* to the other, in silence and as if meditating something terrible, her eyes shone like those of a serpent about to be crushed. Her look was cold, luminous, and penetrating and had something vicious, loathsome and cruel in it.

The slightest defect in anything, the most insignificant or unusual noise brought forth an obscene and infamous expression; but no one responded. To offer an excuse was a crime.

So the day passed. Encountering no obstacle in her way—her husband had been invited out—she became saturated with bile.

Everything around bent itself before her. She met no resistance, there was nothing upon which she could discharge the vials of her wrath. Soldiers and servants crawled before her.

That she might not hear the rejoicing going on outside, she ordered the windows to be closed, and charged the sentry not to permit any one to enter. She tied a handkerchief [131]around her head to prevent it from bursting; and, in spite of the fact that the sun was still shining brightly, she ordered the lamps lighted.

A madwoman who had been detained for disturbing the public peace was taken to the barracks. The *alferez* was not there at the time and the unhappy woman had to pass the night seated on a bench. The following day the *alferez* returned. Fearing lest the unhappy woman should become the butt of the crowd during the *fiesta*, he ordered the soldiers who were guarding her to treat her with pity and give her something to eat. Thus the demented woman passed two days.

Whether the proximity to Captain Tiago's house made it possible for the sad song of Maria Clara to reach her ears, whether other strains of music awoke in her memories of old songs, or whether there was some other cause for it, at any rate, the madwoman began that night to sing with a sweet and melancholy voice the songs of her youth. The soldiers heard her and kept silent. Those songs brought back memories of the old times.

Doña Consolacion also heard it in her sorrow, and became interested in the person who was singing.

"Tell her to come upstairs at once!" she ordered, after some seconds of meditation. Something like a smile passed over her dry lips.

They brought the woman and she presented herself without any discomposure, and without manifesting either fear or surprise.

"Orderly, tell this woman in Tagalog to sing!" said the *alfereza*. "She don't understand me; she does not know Spanish."

The demented woman understood the orderly and sang the song "Night."

Doña Consolacion listened to the beginning with a mocking smile which disappeared gradually from her lips. She became attentive, then more serious and pensive. The woman's voice, the sentiment of the verses and the song itself impressed her. That dry and burning heart was perhaps softened. She understood the song well: "Sadness, cold, and dampness, wrapped in the mantle of Night descend from the sky," as the folk song [132]puts it. It seemed that they were also descending upon her heart. "The withered flower which during the day has paraded its dress, desirous of applause and full of vanity, at nightfall repenting, makes an effort to raise its faded petals to the sky, and begs for a little shade in which to hide itself, so as to die without the mockery of the light which saw it in its pomp, to die without the vanity of its pride being seen, and begging for a drop of dew, to weep over it. The night bird, leaving its solitary retreat in the hollow of the old tree, disturbs the melancholy of the forests...."
"No, no! Do not sing!" exclaimed the *alfereza* in perfect Tagalog and raising to her feet somewhat agitated. "Don't sing! Those verses hurt me!"

The demented woman stopped. The orderly muttered "Bah!" and exclaimed "She knows how to *patá* Tagalog!" and stood looking at the señora full of

surprise.

The Muse understood that she had been caught, and was ashamed. As her nature was not that of a woman, her shame took the form of rage and hatred. She pointed out the door to the impudent orderly and with a kick closed it behind him. She took several turns about the room, twisting a whip between her nervous hands, and then, stopping suddenly in front of the demented woman, said in Spanish: “Dance!”

The demented one did not move.

“Dance! Dance!” she repeated in a threatening voice.

The poor woman looked at the Señora, her eyes devoid of expression. The *alfereza* raised one arm and then the other, shaking them in a menacing way.

She then leaped up in the air, and jumped around urging the other woman to imitate her. The band in the procession could be heard playing a slow, majestic march, but the Señora, leaping about furiously was keeping time to different music than that the band was playing, that music which resounded within her. A curious look appeared in the madwoman’s eyes, and a weak smile moved her pale lips. She liked the Señora’s dancing.

The *alfereza* stopped dancing as if ashamed. She raised the whip, that terrible whip made in Ulango and improved by the *alferez* by winding wire around it, that [133]same terrible whip which the *ladrones* and soldiers knew so well.
“Now it is your turn to dance ... dance!”

And she began to whip lightly the demented woman’s bare feet.

The pale face contracted with pain, and she was obliged to defend herself from the blows by her hands.

“Come! Go ahead!” she exclaimed with savage delight, and she passed from *lento* to *allegro-vivace* in the use of her whip.

The unhappy woman screamed and quickly raised her feet.

“You have got to dance, you d——d Indian!” exclaimed the Señora and the whip whizzed and whistled.

The woman let herself sink to the floor and tried to cover her legs with her hands, at the same time looking with wild eyes at her tormentor. Two heavy lashes on her back made her rise again. Now it was no longer a scream; it was a howl which escaped from the unfortunate woman. The thin shirt was torn, the skin broke open and the blood oozed out.

The sight of blood excites a tiger; so, too, the sight of the blood of her victim infuriated Doña Consolacion.

“Dance! dance! Curse you! D——n you! Dance! Cursed be the mother who bore you!” she cried. “Dance, or I’ll kill you by whipping you to death!”

Then the *alfereza*, taking the woman with one hand and whipping her with another, began to jump and dance.

The insane woman understood her at last and went on moving her arms regardless of time or tune. A smile of satisfaction contracted the lips of the teacher. It was like the smile of a female Mephistopheles who had succeeded in developing a good pupil; it was full of hatred, contempt, mockery and cruelty; a coarse laugh could not have expressed more.

Absorbed in the enjoyment which the spectacle afforded her, she did not hear her husband coming, until he opened the door with a kick.

The *alferez* appeared, pale and gloomy. He saw what was going on there and looked daggers at his wife. She [134]did not move from her tracks and stood smiling in a cynical way.
In the gentlest manner possible, he put his hand on the shoulder of the dancing woman and made her stop. The demented woman sighed and slowly sat down on the blood-covered floor.

The silence continued. The *alferez* was breathing heavily. His wife was observing him with her questioning eyes. She seized the whip and in a calm and measured tone asked him: “What’s the matter with you? You have not said ‘good evening’ to me.”

The *alferez*, without replying, called the orderly.

“Take this woman,” he said, “and have Marta give her another shirt and take care of her. Find her good food, and a good bed.... Let him look out who treats her badly!”

After carefully closing the door, he turned the key in the lock and approached his señora.

“You want me to smash you?” he said, clenching his fists.

“What’s the matter with you?” asked she, retreating a step or two.

“What’s the matter with me?” he shouted, in a thundering voice, and, giving vent to an oath, showed her a paper covered with scribbling. He continued:

“Didn’t you write this letter to the *Alcalde*, saying that I am paid for permitting the gambling, d——n you? I don’t know how I can keep from smashing you.”

“Go ahead! Try it if you dare!” said she, with a mocking smile. “He who smashes me has got to be more of a man than you!”

He heard the insult, but he saw the whip. He seized one of the plates which were on the table and threw it at her head. The woman, accustomed to these fights, ducked quickly and the plate was shivered to pieces against the wall. A glass, a cup, and a knife shared the same fortune.

“Coward!” she cried. “You dare not come near me!”

And then she spat at him to exasperate him more. The man, blind and howling with rage, threw himself on her, but she, with wonderful rapidity, struck him a few blows [135]across the face with the whip, and quickly escaped. Closing the door of her room with a slam, she locked herself in. Roaring with rage and pain the *alferez* followed her, but, coming up against the door, he could do nothing but belch forth a string of blasphemies.
“Cursed be your ancestors, you swine! Open, d——n you! Open that door or I’ll break your skull!” he howled, pounding and kicking the panels.

Doña Consolacion did not reply. A moving of chairs and trunks could be heard, as though some one was trying to raise a barricade of household furniture. The house fairly shook with the oaths and kicks of the husband.

“Don’t you come in! Don’t you come in!” she said, in a bitter voice. “If you show yourself, I’ll shoot you!”

The husband calmed down, little by little, and contented himself with pacing from one end of the *sala* to the other like a wild animal in its cage.

“Go and cool your head!” continued the woman in mockery. She seemed to have concluded her preparations for defense.

“I swear that when I catch you, no one—not even God—will see you again! I’ll smash you so fine.”

“Yes! Now you can say what you wish. You would not let me go to mass. You would not let me fulfill my duty to God!” she said with such sarcasm as she alone knew how to use.

The *alferez* took his helmet, straightened out his clothes, and walked away several paces. But, at the end of several minutes, he returned without making the slightest noise, for he had taken off his boots. The servants, accustomed to these spectacles, paid no attention to them, but the novelty of this move with the boots attracted their notice and they gave each other the wink.

The *alferez* sat down on a chair next to the door and had the patience to wait more than half an hour.

“Have you really gone out or are you there, you he-goat?” asked a voice from time to time, changing the epithets but raising the tone.

Finally, she commenced to take away the furniture from her barricade. He heard the noise and smiled.[136]
“Orderly! Has the señor gone out?” cried Doña Consolacion.

The orderly at a signal from the *alferez*, replied: “Yes, señora, he has gone out!”

He could hear her laugh triumphantly. She drew back the bolt. The husband arose to his feet slowly; the door was opened.

A cry, the noise of a body falling, oaths, howling, swearing, blows, hoarse voices. Who can describe what took place in the darkness of the bedroom?

The orderly, going out to the kitchen, made a very expressive gesture to the cook.

“And now you’ll catch it!” said the latter.

“I? No, sir. The town will, not I. She asked me if he had gone out, not if he had returned.”[137]
[Contents]

Chapter XXII.
Might and Right.

It was about ten o'clock at night. The last rockets lazily soared into the dark sky, where paper balloons shone like new stars. Some of the fireworks had set fire to houses and were threatening them with destruction; for this reason men could be seen on the ridges of the roofs carrying buckets of water and long bamboo poles with cloths tied on the ends. Their dark shadows seemed descended from ethereal space to be present at the rejoicings of human beings. An enormous number of wheels had been burned, also castles, bulls,*caraboas* and other pieces of fireworks, and finally a great volcano, which surpassed in beauty and grandeur anything that the inhabitants of San Diego had ever seen.

Now the people turned in one great crowd toward the plaza to attend the last theatrical performance. Here and there could be seen the colored Bengal lights, fantastically illuminating groups of merry people. The small boys were making use of their torches to search for unexploded firecrackers in the grass, or, in fact, for anything else that might be of use to them. But the music was the signal and all abandoned the lawn for the theatre.

The large platform was splendidly illuminated. Thousands of lights surrounded the pillars and hung from the roof, while a number, in pyramid-shaped groups, were arranged on the floor of the stage. An employee attended to these and whenever he would come forward to regulate them, the public would whistle at him and shout: "There he is! There he is now!"

In front of the stage, the orchestra tuned its instruments, and behind the musicians sat the principal people of the town. Spaniards and rich visitors were occupying the reserved chairs. The public, the mass of people without [138]titles or rank, filled the rest of the plaza. Some carried with them benches, not so much for seats as to remedy their lack of stature. When they stood upon them, rude protests were made on the part of those without benches or things to stand on. Then they would get down immediately, but soon mount up on their pedestals again as if nothing had happened.

Comings and goings, cries, exclamations, laughter, squibs that had been slow in going off, and firecrackers increased the tumult. Here, a foot broke

through a bench, and some one fell to the floor, while the crowd laughed and made a show of him who had come so far to see a show. There, they fought and disputed over positions, and, a little farther on, the noise of breaking bottles and glasses could be heard: it was Andeng. She was carrying drinks and refreshments on a tray which she was balancing with both hands, but she had met her lover and he tried to take advantage of her helplessness by tickling....

The *teniente mayor* presided at the production since the *gobernadorcillo* was fonder of *monte*.

Maria Clara and her friends had arrived, and Don Filipo received them, and accompanied them to their seats. Behind came the curate with another Franciscan and some Spaniards. With the curate were some other people who make it their business to escort the friars.

"May God reward them in another life," said the old man, referring to them as he walked away from Maria Clara's party.

The performance began with Chananay and Marianito in *Crispinoé la Comare*. Everybody had eyes and ears intent upon the stage, except one, Father Salví. He seemed to have come to the theatre for no other purpose than to watch Maria Clara, whose sadness gave to her beauty an air so ideal and interesting that everybody looked upon her with rapture. But the Franciscan's eyes, deeply hidden in their hollow orbits, spoke no words of rapture. In that sombre look one could read something desperately sad. With such eyes Cain might have contemplated from afar the Paradise whose delights his mother had pictured to him.[139]
The act was just ending when Ibarra arrived. His presence occasioned a buzz of conversation. The attention of everybody was fixed on him and on the curate.

But the young man did not seem to be aware of it, for he greeted Maria Clara and her friends with naturalness and sat down at their side. The only one who spoke was Sinang.

"Did you see the volcano when they touched it off?" she asked.

"No, my little friend. I had to accompany the Governor General."

“Well, that is too bad! The curate came with us and he was telling us stories about condemned people. What do you think? Doesn’t he do it to make us afraid so that we cannot enjoy ourselves? How does it appear to you?”

The curate arose and approached Don Filipo, with whom he seemed to be having a lively discussion. He was speaking with animation and Don Filipo replying with moderation and in a low voice.

“I am sorry that I cannot please Your Reverence,” said the latter. “Señor Ibarra is one of the heaviest tax-payers and has a right to sit here as long as he does not disturb the public order.”

“But is not scandalizing good Christians disturbing the public order? You let a wolf into the flock. You will be held responsible for this before God and before the authorities of the town.”

“I always hold myself responsible for acts which emanate from my own will, Father,” replied Don Filipo, slightly inclining his head. “But my little authority does not give me power to meddle in religious affairs. Those who wish to avoid contact with him do not have to speak to him. Señor Ibarra does not force himself on any one.”

“But he affords danger. He who loves danger perishes in it.”

“I don’t see any danger, Father. The *Alcalde* and the Governor General, my superiors, have been talking with him all the afternoon, and it is not for me to give them a lesson.”

“If you don’t put him out of here, we will leave.”[140]
“I am very, very sorry, but I cannot put any one out of here.”

The curate repented having said what he did, but now there was no alternative. He made a signal to his companion, who laboriously rose to his feet and both went out. The persons attached to the friars imitated the priests, not, however, without first glancing with hatred at Ibarra.

Murmurs and whispers increased. Then various persons approached and saluted the young man and said:

“We are with you. Take no notice of them.”

“Who are *’them”*?” he asked with surprise.

“Those who have gone out in order to avoid contact with you.”

“To avoid contact with me? Contact with me?”

“Yes, they say that you are excommunicated.”

Ibarra, surprised, did not know what to say and looked around him. He saw Maria Clara, who was hiding her face behind her fan.

“But is it possible?” he exclaimed at last. “Are we still in the darkness of the Middle Ages? So that——”

And turning to the young women and changing his tone, he said:

“Excuse me; I have forgotten an appointment. I will return to accompany you home.”

“Stay!” said Sinang. “Yeyeng is going to dance in the ‘La Calandria.’ She dances divinely.”

“I cannot, my little friend, but I will certainly return.”

The murmurs increased.

While Yeyeng, dressed in the style of the lower class of Madrid, was coming on the stage with the remark: “*Da Usté su permiso?*” (Do you give your permission?) and as Carvajal was replying to her “*Pase usté adelante*” (Pass forward), two soldiers of the Civil Guard approached Don Filipo, asking him to suspend the performance.

“And what for?” asked he, surprised at the request.

“Because the *alferez* and his Señora have been fighting and they cannot sleep.”

“You tell the *alferez* that we have permission from the [141]*Alcalde*, and that no one in the town has any authority over him, not even the*gobernadorcillo*, who is my *on-ly su-per-ior*.”
“Well, you will have to suspend the performance,” repeated the soldiers.

Don Filipo turned his back to them. The guards marched off.

In order not to disturb the general tranquillity, Don Filipo said not a word about the matter to any one.

After a piece of light opera, which was heartily applauded, the Prince Villardo presented himself on the stage, and challenged all the Moros, who had imprisoned his father, to a fight. The hero threatened to cut off all their heads at a single blow and to send them all to the moon. Fortunately for the Moros, who were making ready to fight to the tune of the "Riego Hymn,"[1] a tumult intervened. All of a sudden, the orchestra stopped playing and the musicians made a rush for the stage, throwing their instruments in all directions. The brave Villardo was not expecting such a move, and, taking them for allies of the Moros he also threw down his sword and shield and began to run. The Moros, seeing this terrible giant fleeing, found it convenient to imitate him. Cries, sighs, imprecations and blasphemies filled the air. The people ran, trampled over each other, the lights were put out, and the glass lamps with their cocoanut oil and little wicks were flying through the air. "*Tulisanes! Tulisanes!*" cried some. "Fire! Fire! *Ladrones!*" cried others. Women and children wept, chairs and spectators were rolled over on the floor in the midst of the confusion, rush and tumult.

"What has happened?"

Two Civil Guards with sticks in hand had gone after the musicians in order to put an end to the spectacle. The *teniente mayor*, with the *cuaderilleros*,[2] armed with their old sabers, had managed to arrest the two Civil Guards in spite of their resistance.[142]
"Take them to the tribunal!" shouted Don Filipo. "Be careful not to let them get away!"

Ibarra had returned and had sought out Maria Clara. The terrified young maidens, trembling and pale, were clinging closely to him. Aunt Isabel was reciting the litanies in Latin.

The crowd having recovered a little from the fright and some one having explained what had caused the rush and tumult, indignation arose in everyone's breast. Stones rained upon the Civil Guards who were being conducted to the tribunal by the *cuaderilleros*. Some one proposed that they burn the barracks of the Civil Guards and that they roast Doña Consolacion and the *alferez* alive.

“That is all that they are good for,” cried a woman, rolling up her sleeves and stretching out her arms. “They can disturb the people but they persecute none but honorable men. They do nothing with the *tulisanes* and the gamblers. Look at them! Let us burn the*cuartel*.”

Somebody had been wounded in the arm and was asking for confession. A plaintive voice was heard coming from under an upset bench. It was a poor musician. The stage was filled with the players and people of the town and they were all talking at the same time. There was Chananay, dressed in the costume of Leonor in the “Trovador,” talking in corrupted Spanish with Ratia, who was in a school teacher’s costume. There too, was Yeyeng, dressed in a silk wrapper, talking with the Prince Villardo. There too, Balbino and the Moros, trying to console the musicians who were more or less sorry sights. Some Spaniards were walking from one place to another, arguing with every one they met.

But a nucleus for a mob already formed. Don Filipo knew what was their intention and tried to stop them.

“Do not break the peace!” he shouted. “To-morrow we will demand satisfaction: we will have justice. I will take the responsibility for our getting justice.”

“No!” some replied. “They did the same thing in Calamba. The same thing was promised, but the *Alcalde* [143]did nothing. We want justice done by our own hands. To the *cuartel*!”
In vain the *teniente mayor* argued with them. The group that had gathered showed no signs of changing its attitude or purpose. Don Filipo looked about him, in search of help. He saw Ibarra.

“Señor Ibarra, for my sake, as a favor, hold them while I seek some *cuaderilleros*.”

“What can I do?” asked the young man, perplexed. But the *teniente mayor* was already in the distance.

Ibarra in turn looked about him, for he knew not whom. Fortunately, he thought he discerned Elias, in the crowd, but not taking an active part in it. Ibarra ran up to him, seized his arm and said to him in Spanish:

“For heaven’s sake! Do something, if you can! I cannot do anything.”

The pilot must have understood, for he lost himself in the mob.

Lively discussions were heard mingled with strong interjections. Soon the mob began to disperse, each one of the participants becoming less hostile. And it was time for them to do so, for the *cuaderilleros* were coming to the scene with fixed bayonets.

In the meantime, what was the curate doing?

Father Salví had not gone to bed. Standing on foot, immovable and leaning his face against the shutter, he was looking toward the plaza and, from time to time, a suppressed sigh escaped his breast. If the light of his lamp had not been so dim, perhaps one might have seen that his eyes were filling with tears. Thus he stood for almost an hour.

The tumult in the plaza roused him from this state. Full of surprise, he followed with his eyes the people as they rushed to and fro in confusion. Their voices and cries he could vaguely hear even at that distance. One of the servants came running in breathlessly and informed him what was going on.

A thought entered his mind. Amid confusion and tumult libertines take advantage of the fright and the weakness of woman. All flee to save themselves; nobody thinks of anyone else; the women faint and their cries [144]are not heard; they fall; are trampled over; fear and fright overcome modesty, and under cover of darkness.... He fancied he could see Ibarra carrying Maria Clara fainting in his arms, and then disappearing in the darkness.
With leaps and bounds, he went down the stairs without hat, or cane, and, almost like a crazy person, turned toward the plaza.

There he found some Spaniards reproving the soldiers. He looked toward the seats which Maria Clara and her friends had been occupying, and saw that they were vacant.

“Father curate! Father curate!” shouted the Spaniards to him, but he took no notice and ran on in the direction of the house of Captain Tiago. There he recovered his breath. He saw through the transparent shade, a shadow—that

adorable shadow, so graceful and delicate in its contour—that of Maria Clara. He could also see another shadow, that of her aunt carrying cups and glasses.

“Well!” he muttered to himself. “It seems that she has only fallen ill.”

Aunt Isabel afterward closed the shell windows and the graceful shadow could no longer be seen.

The curate walked away from there without seeing the crowd. He was looking at the bust of a beautiful maiden which he had before his eyes, a maiden sleeping and breathing sweetly. Her eyelids were shaded by long lashes, which formed graceful curves like those on Rafael’s virgins. Her small mouth was smiling, and her whole countenance seemed to breathe virginity, purity and innocence. That sweet face of hers on the background of the white draperies of the bed was a vision like the head of a cherubim among the clouds. His impassioned imagination went on and pictured to him.... Who can describe all that a burning brain can conceive?[145]

1A popular Spanish song handed down from the time of Riego’s uprising in Spain.

2Volunteer police.

[Contents]

Chapter XXIII.
Two Visitors.

Ibarra found his mind in such a state that it was impossible for him to sleep. So, in order to divert himself and to drive away the gloomy idea which distracted his mind, he began work in his solitary laboratory. Morning came upon him, still at work making mixtures and compounds to the action of which he submitted pieces of cane and other substances, and afterward enclosed them in numbered and sealed flasks.

A servant entered, announcing the arrival of a peasant.

“Let him enter!” said he, without even turning to look.

Elias entered and remained standing in silence.

“Ah! is it you?” Ibarra exclaimed in Tagalog on recognizing him. “Excuse me if I have kept you waiting. I was not aware of your presence. I was making an important experiment.”

“I do not wish to disturb you!” replied the young pilot. “I have come in the first place, to ask you if you want anything from the province of Batangas, whither I am going now; and, in the second place, to give you some bad news.”

Ibarra looked inquiringly at the pilot.

“The daughter of Captain Tiago is ill,” added Elias quietly, “but the illness is not serious.”

“I had already feared it,” responded Ibarra. “Do you know what the illness is?”

“A fever. Now, if you have nothing to order——”

“Thanks, my friend. I wish you a good journey, but before you go, permit me to ask you a question. If it is indiscreet, do not answer me.”

Elias bowed.[146]
“How were you able to quiet the mob last night?” asked Ibarra, fixing his eyes on him.

“In a very simple way,” replied Elias, with entire frankness. “At the head of it were two brothers whose father died from the effects of a whipping at the hands of the Civil Guard. One day I had the fortune to save them from the same hands into which their father fell, and for this both are under obligations to me. Last night I went to them, and requested them to dissuade the others from their purpose.”

“And those two brothers whose father died by being whipped to death?”

“They will end their lives in the same way,” replied Elias in a low voice. “When adversity has marked itself once on a family, all the members have to perish. When the lightning strikes a tree, it reduces it all to ashes.”

And Elias, seeing that Ibarra was silent, took his leave.

The latter on finding himself alone, lost the serenity of countenance which he had preserved in the presence of the pilot, and grief manifested itself in his face.

“I—I have made her suffer,” he muttered.

He quickly dressed himself and descended the stairs.

A little man, dressed in mourning, with a large scar on his left cheek, meekly saluted him, stopping him on his way.

“What do you wish?” Ibarra asked him.

“Señor, my name is Lucas. I am the brother of the man who was killed yesterday during the ceremony when the stone was being laid.”

“Ah! You have my sympathy—and, well?”

“Señor, I wish to know how much you are going to pay my brother’s family.”

“How much I am going to pay?” repeated the young man without being able to conceal a bored expression. “We will talk that over. Come back this afternoon, for I am busy to-day.”

“Only tell me how much you are going to pay,” insisted Lucas.

“I have told you that we would talk about that some other time. I’m too busy to-day,” said Ibarra, impatiently.[147]
“You haven’t time now, señor?” asked Lucas with bitterness and putting himself in front of the young man. “You do not have time to occupy yourself about the dead?”

“Come this afternoon, my good fellow!” repeated Ibarra, restraining himself. “To-day I have to go and see a sick person.”

“Ah! and you forget the dead for a sick person? Do you think that because we are poor——”

Ibarra looked at him and cut off what he was saying.

“Don’t try my patience!” said he, and went on his way. Lucas stood looking at him, with a smile on his face, full of hatred.

“You do not know that you are a grandson of the man who exposed my father to the sun!” he muttered between his teeth. “You have the very same blood in your veins!”

And, changing his tone he added:

“But if you pay well, we are friends.”[148]
[Contents]

Chapter XXIV.
Episode in Espadaña's Life.

The festival was over. The citizens found, just as every year, that their treasury was poorer, that they had worked, perspired, and stayed up nights without enjoying themselves, without acquiring new friends, and in a word, had paid dearly for the noise and their headaches. But it did not matter. The next year they would do the same thing, and the same for the coming century, just as had always been the custom to the present time.

Enough sadness reigned in Captain Tiago's house. All the windows were closed; the people scarcely made a noise, and no one dared to speak except in the kitchen. Maria Clara, the soul of the house, lay sick in her bed.

"What do you think, Isabel? Shall I make a donation to the cross of Tunasan or to the cross of Matahong?" asked the solicitous father in a low voice. "The cross of Tunasan grows, but that of Matahong sweats. Which do you think is the most miraculous?"

Isabel thought for a moment, moved her head and murmured: "To grow—to grow is more miraculous than to sweat. We all sweat, but we do not all grow."

"That is true, yes, Isabel, but bear in mind that for wood to sweat when it is made into the leg of a chair is no small miracle. Well, the best thing to do is to give alms to both crosses, so that neither will feel resentful, and Maria Clara will recover more quickly. Are the rooms in good order? You know that a new señor comes with the doctors, a relative of Father Dámaso by marriage. It is necessary that nothing be lacking."

The two cousins, Sinang and Victoria, were at the other end of the dining-room. They had come to keep company with the sick Maria. Andeng was helping them clean up a tea service in order to serve tea.[149]
"Do you know Doctor Espadaña?" asked Maria Clara's foster sister, directing her question to Victoria.

"No!" replied the latter. "The only thing that I know about him is that he charges very dearly, according to Captain Tiago."

“Then he ought to be very good,” said Andeng. “The one who performed the operation on the stomach of Doña Marta charged a big price, but he was very wise.”

“You goose!” exclaimed Sinang. “Not all who charge high prices are wise. Look at Doctor Guevara. He did not know how to aid a woman in childbirth, but after cutting off the child’s head, he collected one hundred *pesos* from the widower. What he did know was how to charge.”

“What do you know about it?” her cousin asked, giving her a jab with her elbow.

“Why shouldn’t I know about it? The husband, who is a wood-sawyer, after losing his wife, had to lose his house also, for the *Alcalde*was a friend of the doctor’s and made him pay. Why shouldn’t I know? My father loaned him money so that he could make a trip to Santa Cruz.”

A coach stopped before the house and cut off all the conversation.

Captain Tiago, followed by Aunt Isabel, ran downstairs to receive the new arrivals. They were the doctor, Don Tiburcio de Espadaña, his wife, Doctora Doña Victorina de los Reyes *de* de Espadaña; and a young Spaniard. The latter had a sympathetic face and a pleasing appearance.

The *doctora* wore a silk gown, embroidered with flowers, and on her hat, a large parrot half crushed among trimmings of red and blue ribbons. The dust of the road had mingled with the rice powder on her cheeks, strongly accentuating her wrinkles. She was leaning on the arm of her lame husband.

“I have the pleasure to present to you our cousin, Don Alfonso Linares de Espadaña,” said Doña Victorina, pointing toward the young man. “The gentleman is a god-son of a relative of Father Dámaso, and is private secretary to all the ministers.”[150]
The young man bowed gracefully. Captain Tiago almost kissed his hand.

Doña Victorina was a woman of about forty-five summers, which, according to her arithmetical calculations, was equivalent to thirty-two springs. She had been pretty in her youth, but, raging over her own beauty, she had looked with disdain on many Filipino adorers, for her aspirations were for the other race. She had not cared to entrust her little white hand to

anybody, but this not on account of lack of confidence on her part, for she had entrusted rings and jewels of inestimable value to various foreign adventurers.

Six months before the time of the happenings of which we are writing, she saw her beautiful dream realized, that dream of her whole life, on account of which she had disdained all manner of flattery and even the promises of love, which had been cooed into her ears, or sung in serenades by Captain Tiago. Late, it is true, she had realized her dream; but she knew well the proverb—"Better late than never," and consoled herself by repeating it again and again. "There is no complete happiness on this earth," was her other favorite proverb, but neither of these ever passed her lips in the presence of other people.

Doña Victorina, after passing her first, second, third and fourth youth in fishing in the sea of men for the object of her dreams, had at last to content herself with what fortune cared to give her. The poor little woman, if she, instead of having passed thirty-two springs, had not passed more than thirty-one—the difference according to her arithmetic was very great—would have thrown back the prize which Destiny offered her, and preferred to wait for another more in conformity with her tastes. But, as the man proposed and necessity disposed it so, for she needed a husband very badly, she was compelled to content herself with a poor man, who had been driven by necessity to leave the Province of Estremadura in Spain. He, after wandering about the world for six or seven months, a modern Ulysses, found at last in the island of Luzon, hospitality, money, and a faded Calypso, his better half—but alas! a bitter half. He was known as the unhappy Tiburcio Espadaña, and, although he was [151]thirty-five years old and seemed even older, he was, however, younger than Doña Victorina, who was only thirty-two.

He had come to the Philippines in the capacity of clerk in the custom house, but after all the sea-sickness of the voyage and after fracturing a leg on the way, he had the bad luck to receive his discharge fifteen days after his arrival. He was left without a single*cuarto*.

Distrusting the sea, he did not wish to return to Spain without having made a fortune. So he decided to devote himself to something. Spanish pride did not permit him to do any manual labor. The poor man would have worked

with pleasure to have earned an honorable living, but the prestige of the Spaniard did not permit this, nor did that prestige provide him with the necessities of life.

At first he lived at the expense of some of his countrymen, but, as Tiburcio had some self-respect, the bread was sour to him, and instead of getting fat he grew thin. As he had neither knowledge of any science, money nor recommendations, his countrymen, in order to get rid of him, advised him to go to some of the provinces and pass himself off as a Doctor of Medicine. At first, he did not like the idea, and opposed the plan, for although he had been a servant in the San Carlos Hospital, he had not learned anything about the science of healing, his duty having been to dust off the benches and light the fires, and, even in this work, he had served only a short time. But as necessity was pressing him hard, and as his friends pointed out the vanity of his scruples, he took their advice, went into the provinces and began to visit the sick, charging as much for his services as his conscience permitted. Later on he began to charge dearly and to put a high price on his visits. On this account, he was at once taken to be a great doctor and would probably have made his fortune, had not the attention of the Protective Medical Society of Manila, been called to his exorbitant charges and to his harmful competition.

Private citizens and professors interceded in his behalf. “Man!” said the zealous Doctor C. in speaking of him. “Let him make his little money. Let him make [152]his little six or seven thousand *pesos*. He will be able to return to his native land then and live in peace. What does it matter to you? Let him deceive the unwary natives. Then they may become smarter. He is a poor, unhappy fellow. Do not take the bread from his mouth. Be a good Spaniard!”

Doctor C. was a good Spaniard and he winked at the matter. But when the facts reached the ears of the people, they began to lose confidence in him, and little by little Don Tiburcio Espadaña lost his clientage, and found himself almost obliged to beg for bread day by day. Then it was that he learned from a friend of his, who was also a friend of Doña Victorina about the position of that woman, and about her patriotism and good heart. Don Tiburcio saw in her a bit of blue sky and asked to be presented.

Doña Victorina and Don Tiburcio met. *Tarde venientibus ossa*, he would have exclaimed if he had known Latin. She was no longer passable, she was past. Her abundant hair had been reduced to a wad about the size of an onion top, as the servants were wont to describe it. Her face was full of wrinkles and her teeth had begun to loosen. Her eyes had also suffered, and considerably, too. She had to squint frequently when she cared to look off at a certain distance. Her character was the only thing that had remained unchanged.

At the end of half an hour's conversation, they came to an understanding and accepted each other. She would have preferred a Spaniard less lame, less of a stammerer, less bald, one with more teeth, one of more rank and social standing, or *categoría*, as she called it. But this class of Spaniards never came to ask her hand. She had heard, too, more than once that "opportunity is bald," and she honestly believed that Don Tiburcio was that very opportunity, for on account of his dark days he had prematurely lost his hair. What woman is not prudent at thirty-two?

Don Tiburcio, for his part, felt a vague melancholy when he thought of his honeymoon. He smiled with resignation especially when he called the phantom of hunger to his aid. He had never had ambition or pretensions. [153]His tastes were simple, his thoughts limited; but his heart, untouched till then, had dreamed of a very different divinity. In his youth when, tired by his day's labor, after a frugal meal, he lay down on a poor bed, he dreamed of a smiling, affectionate image. Afterward, when his sorrows and privations increased, the years passed and his poetical dreams were not fulfilled, he thought merely of a good woman, a willing hand, a worker, who might afford him a small dowry, console him when tired from labor, and quarrel with him from time to time. Yes, he was thinking of the quarrels as a happiness! But when, obliged to wander from country to country, in search no longer of a fortune, but of some commodity to sustain his life for the remainder of his days; when, deluded by the accounts of his countrymen who came from beyond the seas, he embarked for the Philippines—then the vision of a housekeeper gave way to an image of an arrogant *mestiza*, a beautiful native with large black eyes, draped in silks and transparent garments, loaded with diamonds and gold, offering him her love and her carriages.

He arrived in the Philippines and believed that he was about to realize his dream, for the young women who, in silver-plated carriages, frequented the Luneta and the Malecon, Manila's popular and fashionable drives, looked at him with a certain curiosity. Later, when this curiosity on their part had ceased, the *mestiza* disappeared from his dreams, and with great labor he formed in his mind a picture of a widow, but an agreeable widow. So it was that when he saw only part of his dream taking on real form, he became sad. But he was somewhat of a philosopher and said to himself: "That was a dream, but in the world one does not live in dreams." Thus he settled all his doubts; she wasted a lot of rice powder on her cheeks. Pshaw! When they were once married he would make her stop that easily enough; she had many wrinkles in her face, but his coat had more bare spots and patches; she was old, pretentious, and imperious, but hunger was more imperious, and still more pretentious; and then, too, he had a sweet disposition, and, who could tell?—love modifies character; she spoke Spanish [154]very badly, but he himself did not speak it well; at least, the head of the Customs department had so notified him in his discharge from his position, and besides, what did it matter? What if she was old and ridiculous? He was lame, toothless and bald. When some friend jested with him, he would respond: "Give me bread and call me a fool."

Don Tiburcio was what is vulgarly called a man who would not harm a fly. He was modest and incapable of conceiving an evil thought. He would have made a good missionary had he lived in olden times. His stay in the country had not given him that conviction of his own superiority, of his own worth, and of his high importance, which the larger part of his countrymen acquire in a few weeks in the Philippines. His heart had never been able to conceive hatred for anybody or anything. He had not yet been able to find a revolutionist. He only looked upon the people as unhappy beings whom it was fitting for him to deprive of a little of their wealth in order to prevent himself becoming even more unhappy than they. When they tried to make a case against him for passing as a doctor without a proper license, he did not resent it, he did not complain. He saw the justice of the case, and only replied: "But it is necessary to live!"

So they were married and went to Santa Aña to pass their honeymoon. But on the night of the wedding Doña Victorina had a bad attack of indigestion. Don Tiburcio gave thanks to God and showed solicitude and care. On the

second night, however, he conducted himself like an honorable man, but on the day following, when he looked in the mirror at his bare gums, he smiled with melancholy: he had grown ten years older at least.

Doña Victorina, charmed with her husband, had a good set of front teeth made for him, and had the best tailors in the city dress and equip him. She ordered carriages and *calesas*, sent to Batangas and Albay provinces for the finest spans of horses, and even obliged him to make two entries in the coming horse races.

In the meantime, while she was transforming her husband, she did not forget her own person. She laid aside the silk *saya* or Filipino skirt and *piña* cloth bodice, for [155]a dress of European style. She substituted false curls in front for the simple hair dress of the Filipinos. Her dresses, which fitted her "divinely bad," disturbed the peace and tranquillity of the entire neighborhood.

The husband never went out of the house afoot—she did not want people to see that he was lame. He always took her for drives through the places most deserted, much to her pain, for she wanted to display her husband on the drives most frequented by the public. But out of respect for their honeymoon, she kept silent.

The last quarter of the honeymoon had just begun when he wanted to stop her from using rice powder on her cheeks, saying to her that it was false and not natural. Doña Victorina frowned and looked squarely at his front set of teeth. He at once became silent, and she learned his weakness.

She soon got the idea that she was to become a mother and made the following announcement to all her friends: "Next month, we, I and de Espadaña are going to the *Peñinsula*.1 I don't want to have my son born here and have them call him a revolutionist."

She added a *de* to her husband's name. The *de* did not cost anything and gave *categoría* to the name. When she signed herself, she wrote Victorina de los Reyes de de Espadaña. That *de* de Espadaña was her mania. Neither the lithographer who printed her cards, nor her husband, could get the idea out of her head.

"If I do not put more than one *de* in the name people will think that I haven't it, fool!" said she to her husband.

She was talking continually about her preparations for the voyage to Spain. She learned by memory the names of the points where the steamers called, and it was a pleasure to hear her talk—"I am going to see the *sismus* of the Suez Canal. De Espadaña thinks that it is the most beautiful, and De Espadaña has seen the whole world."—"I will probably never return to this land of savages."—"I was not born to live here. Aden or Port Said would be more suitable for me. I have always [156]thought so since I was a child." Doña Victorina, in her geography, divided the world into two parts, the Philippines and Spain. In this she differed from the lower class of people in Madrid for they divide it into Spain and America, or Spain and China, America and China being merely different names for the same country.

The husband knew that some of these things were barbarisms, but he kept silent so that she would not mock him and twit him with his stammering. She feigned to be whimsical in order to increase her illusion that she was a mother, and she began to dress herself in colors, adorn herself with flowers and ribbons, and to walk through the Escolta in a wrapper. But oh! what an illusion! Three months passed and the dream vanished. By this time, having no fear that her son would be a revolutionist, she gave up the voyage. She consulted doctors, mid-wives and old women, but all in vain. To the great displeasure of Captain Tiago she made fun of San Pascual Bailon, as she did not care to run to any saint. On account of this a friend of her husband told her:

"Believe me, Señora, you are the only *espiritu fuerte* (strong-minded person) in this country."

She smiled without understanding what *espiritu fuerte* meant, but, at night, when it was time to be sleeping, she asked her husband about it.

"Daughter," replied he, "the e—espir—espiritu most fu-fuerte that I know —know about is a—a—ammonia. My fr-fr-friend must have be-been us-using a figure of rhetoric."

From that time on, she was always saying, whenever she could, "I am the only ammonia in this country, speaking rhetorically, as Señor N. de N. who is from the *Peñinsula* and who has much *categoría*, puts it."

Whatever she said had to be done. She had come to dominate her husband completely. On his part, he offered no great resistance, and was converted

into a little lap dog for her. If he incommoded her she would not let him go out for a drive, and when she became really infuriated, she would snatch out his false teeth and leave [157]him a horrible-looking man for one or more days, according to the offense.
It occurred to her that her husband ought to be a Doctor of Medicine and Surgery, and so she expressed herself to him.

"Daughter! Do you want them to arrest me?" he said, frightened.

"Don't be a fool. Let me arrange it!" she replied. "You are not going to attend any one, but I want them to call you a doctor and me a*doctora*, eh?"

And on the following day Rodoreda, a prominent marble dealer in Manila, received an order for the following engraving on black marble: Dr. De Espadaña, Specialist in All Kinds of Diseases.

All of the servants had to give them their new titles, and, in consequence of it all, she increased the number of her curls in front, the layer of rice powder, the ribbons and laces, and looked with more disdain than ever on the poor and less fortunate women of her country, who had less *categoría* than she. Each day she felt herself more dignified and elevated, and, following along this road, in less than a year she would think herself of divine origin.

These sublime thoughts, however, did not prevent her from growing more ridiculous and older each day. Every time that Captain Tiago met her in the street and remembered that he had once made love to her in vain, he would go at once to the church and give a*peso* for a mass as a thank offering for his good luck in not marrying her. In spite of this, Captain Tiago highly respected her husband, on account of his title of "specialist in all kinds of diseases," and he listened with close attention to the few phrases that he managed to stutter out. In fact, it was on account of this title and the fact that the doctor did not attend everybody, that the Captain chose him to attend his daughter.

As to the young man Linares, it is a different story. When she was making ready for her voyage to Spain, Doña Victorina thought of having an administrator from the *Peñinsula* to look after her affairs, for she did not trust Filipinos. Her husband remembered a nephew in [158]Madrid who was studying to become a lawyer, and who was considered the smartest one in

his family. They wrote to him, then, sending him in advance money for the passage, and, when the dream was dispelled, the young man was already on his way.
These are the three persons who had just arrived.

While they were eating their breakfast, Father Salví arrived, and, as the husband and wife had already met the friar, they presented him to the young Linares, with all his titles. The young man blushed.

As was natural they spoke of Maria Clara. The young maiden was resting and sleeping. They talked over the voyage. Doña Victorina showed her verbosity by criticising the customs of the provinces, the *nipa* houses, the bamboo bridges, without forgetting to tell the curate about her friendship with the Commander of the Army, the *Alcalde* so and so, Judge so and so of the Supreme Court, and with the governor of the province, all persons of *categoría*, who had much consideration for her.

"If you had come two days before, Dona Victorina," replied Captain Tiago during a short pause, "you would have met His Excellency, the Governor General. He sat right there."

"What? How's that? Was His Excellency here? And in your house? A lie!"

"I tell you he sat right there. If you had come two days before——"

"Ah! What a shame that little Clara did not fall sick before!" exclaimed she, in real sorrow. And directing herself to Linares: "Do you hear, cousin? His Excellency was here! You see De Espadaña was right when he told you that we were not going to the house of a miserable native. For you should know, Don Santiago, that our cousin was a friend of all the Ministers in Madrid and all the Dukes, and he dined in the house of Count del Campanario (belfry)."

"Duke de la Torre (tower), Victorina," said her husband, correcting her.

"It amounts to the same thing. Do you think you can tell me that——"

"Would I find Father Dámaso in town to-day?" interrupted [159]Linares, turning to Father Salví. "They have told me that he is near here."
"He is, precisely, and will come here in a little while," replied the curate.

“How glad I am! I have a letter for him,” exclaimed the young man. “And if it had not been for this happy chance which brought me here, I would have come expressly to visit him.”

“The happy chance—that is, Maria Clara—had, in the meantime awakened.”

“De Espadaña!” said Doña Victorina, finishing her breakfast. “Are we going to see little Clara?” And turning to Captain Tiago, “For you only, Don Santiago; for you alone! My husband does not treat anybody except people of *categoría*, and he even refuses some of them! My husband is not like those about here—in Madrid he only visited people of *categoría*.”

They passed into the sick room.

The room was almost dark. The windows were shut for fear of a draught, and the little light which illuminated the room came from the two wax candles which were burning in front of an image of the Virgin of Antipolo.

Her head wrapped up in a handkerchief, saturated in cologne water, her body wrapped in wide folds of white sheets which outlined her virginal form, the sick maiden lay on her bed of *kamakon*[2] among *jusi* and *piña* curtains. Her hair, forming a frame around her oval face, increased her transparent paleness, which was animated only by her large eyes full of sadness. At her side were her two friends and Andeng.

De Espadaña felt of her pulse, examined her tongue, asked some questions, and shaking his head seriously, said:

“Sh-sh-she is si-sick. But we-we-we can cu-cu-cure her.”

Doña Victorina looked with pride at those around her.

“A li-lichen in mil-milk in the-the morning; syrup of marsh marsh-mal-mallow, tw-o—two hounds’—hounds’ tongue pi-pills,” ordered De Espadaña.[160]

“Take courage, little Clara,” said Doña Victorina, approaching her. “We have come to cure you. I am going to present our cousin to you.”

Linares was absorbed, contemplating those eloquent eyes which seemed to be seeking some one, and he did not hear Doña Victorina call him.

“Señor Linares,” said the curate, calling him out of his ecstacy. “Here comes Father Dámaso.”

In fact, Father Dámaso was coming, pale and somewhat sad. On leaving his bed, his first visit was to Maria Clara. He was no longer the Father Dámaso that he had been, so robust and talkative. He now walked along in silence and with unsteady footsteps.[161]

1A wrong pronunciation of the Spanish Peninsula meaning Spain.

2A costly and rich wood like ebony.

[Contents]

Chapter XXV.
Schemes.

Without paying attention to anybody, Father Dámaso went straight to the sick room and took hold of Maria's hand.

"Maria!" said he, with indescribable tenderness, as tears dropped from his eyes. "Maria, my child, you are not going to die!"

Maria opened her eyes and looked at him with surprise.

None who knew the Franciscan suspected that he ever had such tender thoughts. No one ever supposed that a heart existed under that gross and rude aspect.

Father Dámaso could say no more and left the maiden, weeping like a child. He went out through the room at the head of the stairs, to give free vent to his grief, on Maria Clara's balcony under her favorite vines.

"How he loves his god-daughter!" thought they all.

Father Salví witnessed the scene, immovable and silent, lightly biting his lips.

When his grief was somewhat soothed, Father Dámaso was introduced by Doña Victorina to the young Linares, who approached the friar with respect.

Father Dámaso gazed at him in silence from head to foot. He took the letter which the young man handed to him and read it apparently without understanding it, for he asked him:

"And who are you?"

"Alfonso Linares, the god-son of your brother-in-law," stammered the young man.

Father Dámaso leaned back and examined the young man again. His face brightened up and he rose to his feet.

"And so you are the god-son of little Charles!" he exclaimed. [162]"Come here and let me embrace you. It was some days ago that I received your

letter. So it is you! I did not know you—but that is easily explained, for you were not yet born when I left the country. I never knew you."
And Father Dámaso stretched out his robust arms to the young man who blushed, either from shame or suffocation. Father Dámaso seemed to have completely forgotten his grief.

After the first moments of effusion had passed, and questions had been asked about Carlicos, as he called little Charles, Father Dámaso asked:

"Well. What does Carlicos want me to do for you?"

"I believe he says something in the letter," stammered Linares again.

"In the letter? Let us see. 'Tis so! And he wants me to get you a job and a wife! Hm! Employment—employment: that is easy. Do you know how to read and write?"

"I have graduated in law from the Central University."

"*Carambas!* So you are a pettifogger? Well, you don't look it—you look more like a young gentleman. But so much the better! But to find you a wife—hm! hm! a wife."

"Father, I am not in a hurry about it," said Linares, confused.

But Father Dámaso began to walk from one end of the room to the other, muttering: "A wife! A wife!"

His face by this time was no longer sad, nor was it cheerful. It expressed the greatest seriousness and he seemed to be meditating. Father Salví surveyed the scene from a distance.

"I did not believe that it could give me such pain," murmured Father Dámaso in a mournful voice. "But of two evils the lesser."

And raising his voice and approaching Linares, he said:

"Come here, my boy! We will speak with Santiago."

Linares turned pale and allowed himself to be led along by the priest, who was deep in thought.[163]
Then it was Father Salví's turn to walk up and down the room and he did so, meditating, as was his custom.

A voice bidding him good morning stopped his monotonous tread. He raised his head and his eyes met Lucas, who saluted him humbly.

“What do you want?” asked the eyes of the curate.

“Father, I am the brother of the man who was killed on the day of the *fiesta*,” replied Lucas, in a tearful tone.

Father Salví stepped back.

“And what of it?” he muttered, in an unintelligible voice.

Lucas made an effort to weep, and dried his eyes with his handkerchief.

“Father,” said he, crying, “I have been to Crisostomo’s house to ask him for indemnity. At first, he received me with kicks, saying that he would not pay anything, since he had run the risk of being killed through the fault of my dear, unfortunate brother. Yesterday, I went to talk with him again, but he had already left for Manila, leaving me for charity’s sake five hundred *pesos* for my poor brother—five hundred *pesos*—ah! Father.”

The curate listened to the first part of his story with surprise and attention, but slowly there appeared on his lips a smile—a smile of such contempt and sarcasm at the comedy that was being played, that if Lucas had seen it he would have fled in all haste.

“And what do you want now?” he asked, turning his back to him.

“Alas! Father, for love of God tell me what I ought to do. Father, you have always given good advice.”

“Who has told you that? You do not live here.”

“But the whole province knows you, Father!”

Father Salví went up to him with his eyes full of anger and, motioning to the street, said to the frightened Lucas:

“Go to your house and give thanks to Don Crisostomo that he has not sent you to jail. Get away from here.”

Forgetting his rôle, Lucas muttered:

“Well, I thought——”[164]
“Out of here!” cried Father Salví, in a nervous tone.

“I want to see Father Dámaso.”

“Father Dámaso is busy. Out of here!” ordered the curate, in an imperative tone, again.

Lucas went down the stairs murmuring: “He is another. How poorly he pays! He who pays better....”

The voice of the curate had reached the ears of all in the house, even Father Dámaso, Captain Tiago and Linares.

“An insolent beggar who came to ask alms and doesn’t want to work,” said Father Salví, taking his hat and cane and starting toward the convent.[165]
[Contents]

Chapter XXVI.
The Persecuted.

By the dim light which the moon diffused through the thick branches of the trees, a man wandered along the forest trails slowly and cautiously. From time to time, as if to find out where he was, he whistled a particular melody, to which another in the distance responded with the same air. The man listened attentively, and afterward proceeded in the direction of the distant sound.

Finally, passing through the thousand difficulties which a virgin forest offers in the night time, he came to a small clearing. High rocks, crowned with trees, surrounded the place, forming a sort of ruined amphitheatre. Recently cut trees, with their charred trunks and enormous rocks, which Nature had covered with her mantle of green foliage, filled the middle of the open space.

Scarcely had the unknown man arrived, when another figure quickly appeared from behind one of the large rocks, advanced and drew a revolver.

“Who are you?” he asked in Tagalog and, in an imperious voice, as he cocked the hammer of his weapon.

“Is old Pablo among you?” asked the first calmly, without replying to the question or becoming intimidated.

“Do you refer to the Captain? Yes, he is.”

“Tell him, then, that Elias is looking for him here,” said the man.

“Are you Elias?” asked the other with a certain respect, and approaching him without lowering his revolver. “Then come.”

Elias followed him.

They penetrated into a kind of cavern, which was hollowed out in the depths of the earth. The guide, who knew the way, told the pilot when he ought to get down, stoop or crawl. However, it was not long before they came to a [166]*sala* or room in the cave, miserably illuminated by pitch torches, and occupied by twelve or fifteen armed men. The faces of the men

were dirty and their clothes ragged; some were sitting down, others lying down, conversing among themselves in a low tone. Leaning his elbows on a stone which served as a table and contemplating thoughtfully the lamp, which was shedding very little light for the amount of smoke it made, sat an old man. His countenance was sad, and his head wrapped in a bloody rag. If we had not known that the place was a cave of *tulisanes*, we would have said, on reading the desperation on the face of the old man, that it was the Tower of Hunger on the eve when Ugolino devoured his sons.
At the arrival of Elias and the guide, the men were about to arise, but, at a signal from the guide, they were quieted and contented themselves with examining the pilot, who was entirely unarmed.

The old man turned his head slowly and his eyes met the sturdy figure of Elias. The latter, in turn, with his head uncovered, full of sadness and interest, gazed upon the old man.

"Is it you?" asked the old man, his face brightening a little as he recognized the youth.

"How badly off you are!" murmured Elias, in an half-intelligible tone of voice.

The old man bowed in silence, made a sign to the men, who then arose and left, not, however, without first directing glances at the pilot, measuring his stature and muscles.

"Yes!" said the old man to Elias as soon as they found themselves alone. "Six months ago, I gave you refuge in my house. Then, it was I who sympathized with you; now, fortune has changed and it is you who pity me. But sit down, and tell me how you came here."

"Some fifteen days ago they told me of your misfortune," replied the young man slowly, and in a low voice, looking toward the light. "I at once set out on the road and I have been searching for you from mountain to mountain. I have travelled over the greater part of two provinces.

"Rather than spill innocent blood," said Pablo, "I have [167]had to flee. My enemies are afraid to show themselves and shield themselves behind some unhappy fellows who have never done me the slightest injury."

Then, after a short pause, of which Elias took advantage to read the thoughts in that melancholy countenance, he replied:

“I have come to make a proposition. Having searched in vain for some member of the family which has caused me my misfortunes, I have decided to leave the province where I am living and to emigrate to the north and live there among the heathen and independent tribes. Do you want to leave this life and go with me? I will be your son, since you have lost those whom you had, and I, who have no family, will take you as my father.”

The old man shook his head and said:

“At my age, when a person makes a desperate resolution it is because there is no other course open. A man who, like me has passed his youth and the best years of his life working for his own future and for the future of his sons, a man who has been submissive to all the wishes of his superiors, who has discharged conscientiously all his duties, suffered everything in order to live in peace and in tranquillity; when such a man, whose blood has been chilled by Time, renounces all his past and all his future, on the very edge of his grave—when a man does this, it is because he has decided with mature judgment that peace does not exist, and that there is no Supreme Good. What use is there in living a few miserable days in a foreign land? I had two sons, a daughter, a fireside, a fortune. I enjoyed consideration and esteem. Now I am like a tree that has been stripped of its branches; a wandering fugitive, hunted like a wild beast in the forest, and all—why? Because a man dishonored my daughter, because her brothers wanted to make that man account for his infamous deed, and because that man is placed above all others with a title of Minister of God. But despite it all, I, a father, I, dishonored in my old age, pardoned the injury, for I was indulgent with the passions of youth and the weakness of the flesh, and, as the evil was irreparable, I wanted to save what still remained to me. But the criminal, afraid that vengeance was near at hand, [168]sought the destruction of my sons. What did he do? You do not know? Do you know how they feigned that there had been a robbery in the convent and how one of my sons figured among the accused? The other son they could not include because he was away. Do you know the tortures to which they were submitted? You know them because they are like those in other towns. I saw my son hung by the hair, I heard his cries, I heard him call me, and, coward

that I was, and, accustomed to peace, I was not brave enough to kill or be killed. Do you know that the robbery was not proved, that it was seen that it was a calumny, that the curate was transferred to another town and that my son died from the result of his tortures? The other boy, who was still left for me, was not a coward like his father. The executioner was afraid that this son would take revenge for the death of his brother and so, under pretense of his not having a*cedula*,1 which for the moment had been forgotten, he was imprisoned by the Civil Guard, maltreated, irritated and provoked by force and injuries until he was driven to suicide. And I have survived after such a disgrace. But, if I had not the courage of a father to defend his sons, I have left a heart to take vengeance and I shall be revenged! The discontented are uniting under my command, my enemies increase my camp, and on that day when I consider myself strong enough I will go down into the plain and extinguish in fire both my vengeance and my own existence. And that day will come or there is no God!"
The old man rose to his feet deeply agitated. With his eyes sparkling like fire and, in a hollow voice, he added, tearing his long hair:

"Curses upon me, curses upon me for having restrained the avenging hand of my sons. I have assassinated them! Had I allowed them to kill the criminal; had I had less faith in the justice of God and of men, I would now have my sons; perhaps they would have been fugitives, but I would have them and they would not have died in torture. I was not born to be a father! For that reason, I [169]haven't them with me now! Curses upon me for not having learned, with all my years, in what age we live! But in blood and fire, and in my own death, I will know how to take vengeance for them!"
The unfortunate father, in the paroxysm of his grief, had taken off the bandage from his head, opening up a wound which he had on the forehead and from which the blood oozed out.

"I respect your grief," replied Elias, "and I understand your desire for vengeance. I, too, am like you, but, for fear of harming an innocent one, I prefer to forget my misfortunes."

"You can forget them because you are young, and because you have not lost your son, have not lost your last hope! But, I assure you, I will not harm an innocent person. Do you see that wound? I allowed myself to receive that in order not to kill a poor *cuaderillero*who was fulfilling his duty."

“But see!” said Elias, after a moment’s silence. “See what frightful destruction you will bring upon our unfortunate country. If you seek revenge by your own hand your enemies will retaliate, not against you, not against those who are armed, but against the people, who are always accused, and then how many more injustices!”

“Let the people learn to defend themselves. Let each learn to defend himself.”

“You know that that is impossible. Señor, I have known you in other times when you were happy, then you gave me wise advice. Will you permit me...?”

The old man crossed his arms and seemed to meditate upon what he was going to say.

“Señor,” continued Elias, measuring his words well, “I have had the fortune to be of service to a young man, rich, of good heart, noble, and a lover of his country’s welfare. They say that this young man has friends in Madrid. I do not know it, but I can positively assure you that he is a friend of the Governor General. What do you say if we make him the bearer of the people’s complaints, if we can interest him in the cause of the unhappy?”

The old man shook his head.

“Do you say that he is a rich man? The rich think of [170]nothing but to increase their riches. Pride and pomp blind them, and, since they are generally well off, especially if they have powerful friends, none of them ever troubles himself about the unfortunates. I know it all, for I was once rich myself.”

“But the man of whom I am speaking does not seem to be like the others. He is a son who would not allow the memory of his father to be dishonored. He is a young man who thinks about the future—thinks of a good future for his sons, for he may in a short time have a family of his own.”

“Then he is a man who is going to be happy. Our cause is not a cause for happy men.”

“But it is a cause for men of good hearts.”

“That may be,” replied the old man sitting down. “Suppose that he consented to carry our complaints to the Governor General. Suppose that he finds in the court those who will argue for us. Do you think we will get justice?”

“Let us try it before resorting to bloody measures,” replied Elias. “It must seem strange to you that I, another unfortunate, young, robust—that I should propose to you old and weak—peaceful measures. But it is because I have seen so many miseries caused by us similar to those caused by tyrants. The unarmed is the one who suffers.”

“And if we do not accomplish anything?”

“Something will be accomplished, believe me! Not all who govern are unjust. And if we do not accomplish anything, if our voice is not listened to, if the man turns a deaf ear to the grief of his fellow men, then we will put ourselves under your orders.”

The old man, full of enthusiasm, embraced the young man.

“I accept your proposition, Elias. I know that you will keep your word. You come to me and I will help you take vengeance for your father. You will help me to take vengeance for my sons—my sons who were like you!”

“In the meantime, Señor, avoid all violent measures.”

“You can expound the complaints of the people. You certainly know them. When will we know the answer?”

“Within four days send a man to meet me on the beach at San Diego and I will tell him what the person [171]in whom I have hope says. If he accepts, we will get justice, and if he does not accept, I will be the first to fall in the fight which we will begin.”
“Elias will not die. Elias will be chief, when Captain Pablo falls, satisfied in his revenge,” said the old man.[172]

1Certificate of identification required of all Filipinos under Spanish domination.

[Contents]

Chapter XXVII.
The Cock Fight.

In order to keep the Sabbath holy in the Philippines the people generally go to the cock fight, just as in Spain they go to the bull fight. Cock fighting, a passion introduced into the country and exploited for a century, is one of the vices of the people, more deeply rooted than the opium vice among the Chinese. The poor go there to risk what little they have, desirous of making money without working; the rich go there to amuse themselves, using the money which they have left over from their feasts and thanksgiving masses. The cock is educated with great care, with more care, perhaps, than the son who is to succeed his father in the cock-pit. The Government permits it and almost recommends it, for it decrees that the fight shall only be held in the public plazas and on holidays from after high mass till dark—eight hours.

The San Diego cock-pit does not differ from others which are found in all the towns. It consists of three parts: The first, or entrance, is a large rectangle, some twenty meters in length and fourteen in breadth. On one side is the door, generally guarded by a woman who collects the entrance fee. From the contribution which each one makes the Government receives a part, some hundred thousands of*pesos* each year. They say that with this money, which gives license to the vice, magnificent schools are raised, bridges and roadways constructed, and rewards offered for the encouragement of agriculture and commerce. Blessed be the vice which produces such good results! In this first precinct are the vendors of betel nut, cigars and tobacco, delicacies and refreshments. There the small boys, who accompany their fathers or uncles, are carefully initiated into the secrets of life.

This precinct communicates with another of slightly [173]larger dimensions, a sort of vestibule, where the people gather before the fight. There, one sees most of the cocks, tied by a cord to a bone driven into the ground like a nail; there, are the bettors, the lovers of the sport, the man skilled in fastening the gaffs or spurs to the cock’s legs; there, bargains are made, the situation discussed, money borrowed, and people curse, swear and laugh boisterously. In one place, some one is caressing his game cock, passing his hand over his brilliant plumage; in another, a man examines and counts the

number of scales on the rooster's legs, for that, they say, is a sign of valor. The battles of the heroes are related. There, too, you will see many a disappointed owner, with a sour face carrying out by the legs, a dead rooster, stripped of its plumage—the animal which was a favorite for months, petted, cared for day and night, and on which flattering hopes had been founded: now, nothing more than a dead fowl, to be sold for a *peseta*, stewed in ginger and eaten that very night. *Sic transit gloria mundi!* The loser returns to his fire-side, where an anxious wife and ragged children await him, without his little capital, without his rooster. From all that gilded dream, from all the care of months, from daybreak to sunset, from all those labors and fatigue, from all that, results a *peseta*, the ashes left from so much smoke.

In this *foyer*, or vestibule, the most ignorant discuss the coming contests; the most trifling, examine conscientiously the bird, weigh it, contemplate it, extend its wings, feel of its muscles. Some of the people are very well dressed, and are followed and surrounded by the backers of their game cocks. Others, dirty, with the seal of vice imprinted on their squalid faces, anxiously follow the movements of the rich and watch their betting, for the pocketbook can be emptied and the passion still be unsatisfied. There you see no face that is not animated, no indolent Filipino; none apathetic, none silent. All is movement, passion, eagerness.

From this place, one passes into the arena or *rueda*, as it is called. The floor, inclosed by bamboos, is generally elevated higher than the floor of the other two parts of the cock-pit. Running up from the floor and almost touching [174]the roof, are rows of seats for the spectators or gamblers—they come to be the same. During the combat these seats are filled with men and children who cry, shout, perspire, quarrel, and blaspheme. Fortunately, scarcely any women visit the cock-pit. In the *rueda* are the prominent men, the rich class, the bettors, the bookmaker, and the referee. The cocks fight on the ground, which is beaten down perfectly smooth, and there Destiny distributes to families laughter or tears, feasts or hunger.

As we enter, we can see the *gobernadorcillo*, Captain Pablo, Captain Basilio, and Lucas, the man with the scar on his face who was so disconsolate over the death of his brother.

Captain Basilio approaches one of those present and asks him:

“Do you know what cock Captain Tiago is going to bring?”

“I do not know, Señor. This morning two arrived, one of them the *lásak* (black sprinkled with white) which whipped the Consul’s*talisain* (red, sprinkled with black).”

“Do you think that my *bulik* (black, red and white), can beat him?”

“Yes, I surely do. I’ll stake my house and shirt on him!”

At that moment Captain Tiago arrived. He was dressed, like the big gamblers, in a *camisa* of Canton linen, woolen pantaloons, and a panama-straw hat. Behind him came two servants, carrying the *lásak* and a white cock of colossal proportions.

“Sinang tells me that Maria Clara is improving steadily,” said Captain Basilio.

“She no longer has any fever, but she is still weak.”

“Did you lose last night?”

“A little. I heard that you won.... I am going to see if I can win back my money.”

“Do you want to fight your *lásak*?” asked Captain Basilio, looking at the rooster.

“That depends on whether there is any money up.”

“How much will you stake?”

“I don’t play less than two thousand.”[175]
“Have you seen my *bulik*?” asked Captain Basilio, and then called a man to bring a small rooster.

Captain Tiago examined it, and after weighing it in his hand, and examining its scales, he handed it back.

“What do you put up?” he asked.

“Whatever you say.”

“Two thousand five hundred?”

“Make it three?”

“Three.”

“Let her go!”

The circle of curious people and gamblers learn that the two celebrated cocks are to be fought. Both the roosters have made a history for themselves; both have a reputation. All want to see and examine the two celebrities. Opinions are expressed, and prophecies made.

In the meantime the voices grow louder, the confusion is augmented, the *rueda* fills up and a rush is made for the seats. The*soltadores* bring two cocks to the ring for a preliminary contest. One of the roosters is *blanco* (white), the other *rojo* (red). They are already spurred, but the gaffs are not yet unsheathed. Cries of “*Al blanco! al blanco!*” are heard. Some one else shouts, “*Al rojo!*” The*blanco* is the favorite.

Civil Guards circulate among the crowd. They are not wearing the uniform of their body, nor do they wear the costume of the native. Pantaloons of *guingon* with a red fringe, a blue-spotted blouse shirt, and the *cuartel* cap —you have here their disguise, in harmony with their deportment; watching and betting, making disturbance and talking of maintaining the peace.

While the shouting is going on and men are jingling money in their hands; while the people are going down in their pockets for the last *cuarto*, or, if that is wanting, pledging their word, promising to sell their *carabao*, or their next harvest, two young men, apparently brothers, follow the gamblers with envious eyes. They approach, timidly murmur words which nobody catches, and each time become more and more melancholy, and look at each other with disgust and indignation. Lucas observes them, smiles malignantly, rattles some silver *pesos*, passes near to the two brothers, and looks toward the *rueda*, shouting:[176]
“I am betting fifty, fifty against twenty on the white!”

The two brothers exchanged looks.

“I told you,” murmured the older, “not to bet all your money. If you had obeyed me, we would have it now to put on the red.”

The younger one approached Lucas timidly and touched him on the arm.

“Is it you?” exclaimed the latter turning around and feigning surprise. “Does your brother accept my proposition or did you come to bet?”

“How can we bet when we have lost all?”

“Then you accept?”

“He does not want to! If you could lend us something: you have already said that you knew us....”

Lucas scratched his head, pulled down his *camisa* and replied:

“Yes, I know you. You are Tarsilo and Bruno, both young and strong. I know that your brave father died from the result of the hundred lashes which the soldiers gave him. I know that you do not think of avenging him.”

“You need not meddle in our history,” interrupted Tarsilo, the older. “That is a disgrace. If we did not have a sister, we would have been hanged long ago.”

“Hanged? They only hang cowards, or some one who has no money or protection. Certainly the mountains are near.”

“A hundred against twenty on the *blanco*,” cried one as he passed the group.

“Loan us four *pesos* ... three ... two,” begged the younger brother. “Presently I will return it to you doubled. The fight is going to begin.”

Lucas scratched his head again.

“Tst! This money is not mine. Don Crisostomo has given it to me for those who want to serve him. But I see that you are not like your father. He was really courageous.”

And, saying this, he went away from them, although not far.

“Let us accept. What does it matter?” said Bruno to his brother. “It amounts to the same thing whether you [177]are hanged or shot down. We poor serve for nothing else.”
“You are right, but think of our sister.”

In the meantime, the circle around the ring had been dispersed; the fight was going to commence. The voices began to die away, and the two *soltadores* and the skilled gaff fitter, were alone in the middle of the *rueda*. At a signal from the referee, the sheaths were removed from the razor-like knives on the cocks' legs, and the fine blades glistened in a menacing way.

The two brothers, gloomy and silent, approached the ring and, resting their faces against the bamboo railing, watched the preparations. A man approached them and said in their ears: "Hundred to ten on the *blanco*!"

Tarsilo looked at him stupidly. Bruno elbowed his brother, who responded with a grunt.

The *soltadores* handle the roosters with masterly skill, taking great care not to wound them. A deep silence reigns throughout the pit. You would think that those present, with the exception of the two *soltadores*, were horrible wax figures. The two roosters are brought close together and allowed to pick at each other and thus become irritated. Then they allow them to look at each other, so that the poor little birds may know who has plucked out their feathers, and with whom they should fight. The feathers around the neck stand up; they look at each other fixedly; flashes of wrath escape from their little, round eyes. The moment has come. The birds are placed on the ground in the ring at a certain distance from each other.

The cocks advance slowly. Their little steps are heard upon the hard floor. Nobody speaks; nobody breathes. Lowering and raising their heads, as if measuring each other with a look, the two roosters mutter sounds, perhaps of threat or contempt. They have perceived the shining blades. Danger animates them, and they turn toward each other decided, but they stop at a short distance, and, as they look at each other, they bow their heads and again raise their feathers on end. With their natural valor, they rush at each other impetuously; they [178]strike beak against beak; breast against breast, blade against blade, and wing against wing. The blows have been stopped with dexterity and skill, and only a few feathers have fallen. They again measure each other! Suddenly the *blanco* turns and, raising himself in the air, flashes his death-dealing knife, but the *rojo* has already doubled up his legs, ducked his head and the *blanco*has only cut the air. Then, on touching the ground, to avoid being wounded from behind, he turns quickly and faces

the other. The red attacks him with fury, but he defends himself with coolness. Not without reason was he the favorite of the crowd. All, trembling and anxious, follow the movements of the battle, now this one and now that one giving an involuntary shout. The ground is being covered with red and white feathers, tinged with blood. But the duel does not go to the one who draws first blood. The Filipino here follows the laws laid down by the Government, which say that the cock which is killed or flees loses the fight. The blood now wets the ground; the blows are repeated, but the victory is still undecided. Finally, making a supreme effort, the *blanco* throws himself forward to give a last blow; he drives his knife into the wing of the *rojo* and buries it among the bones. But the *blanco* has been wounded in the breast, and both, weak from loss of blood, and panting, fastened together, remain immovable until the *blanco* falls, bleeds through his neck, kicks violently and is in the agony of death. The *rojo*, pinned by his wing, is held to the other's side; and little by little he doubles up his legs and slowly closes his eyes.

Then the referee, in accordance with the regulations prescribed by the Government, declares the *rojo* the winner. A wild and prolonged outcry greets the decision, an outcry which is heard throughout the town. He, who, from afar, hears the cry, understands that the *dejado* has beaten the favorite, for otherwise the outcry would not have lasted so long. So it happens among nations: when a small nation succeeds in gaining a victory over a greater one, the song and story of it last through centuries.

"Do you see?" said Bruno, with indignation, to his [179]brother, "if you had taken my advice to-day, we would have had one hundred*pesos*. On your account we are without a *cuarto*."

Tarsilo did not reply, but, with wide-open eyes, looked around him as if in search of some one.

"There he is talking with Pedro," added Bruno. "He is giving him money—what a lot of money!"

Tarsilo remained silent and thoughtful. With the arm of his *camisa*, he wiped away the sweat which formed in drops on his forehead.

"Brother," said Bruno, "I am decided, even if you are not. The *lásak* ought to win and we ought not to lose the opportunity. I want to bet on the next fight. What does it matter? Thus, we will avenge our father."

“Wait!” said Tarsilo to him, and looked him in the eyes. Both were pale. “I am with you. You are right. We will avenge our father.”

He stopped, however, and again wiped away the perspiration.

“Why do you stop?” asked Bruno impatiently.

“Do you know what fight is the next one? Is it worth the trouble?”

“What! Haven’t you heard? Captain Tiago’s *lásak* against Captain Basilio’s *bulik*. According to the run of luck, the *lásak* ought to win.”

“Ah! The *lásak*. I would bet ... but let us make sure first.”

Bruno made a gesture of impatience, but followed his brother. The latter looked the rooster over carefully, thought about it, debated with himself and asked a few questions. The unfortunate fellow was in doubt. Bruno was nervous and looked at him angrily.

“Why, don’t you see that wide scale which he has there near the spur? Do you see those feet? What more do you want? Look at those legs. Stretch out his wings. And that broken scale on top of that wide one, and that double one?”

Tarsilo did not hear him, he kept on examining the cock. The rattle of silver coins reached his ears.

“Let us see the *bulik* now,” said he, in a choking voice.[180]
Bruno stamped the ground with his feet, grated his teeth, but obeyed his brother.

They approached the other group. There they were arming the cock, they were selecting gaffs for him, and the expert, in fitting them to the rooster’s legs, was preparing a piece of red silk. He waxed it and rubbed it over his knee a number of times.

Tarsilo gazed at the bird with a sombre air. It seemed that he was not looking at the cock, but at something in the future. He passed his hand over his forehead.

“Are you ready?” he asked his brother, his voice scarcely perceptible.

“I? Long ago. Without having to see them.”

“It is our poor sister——”

“Bah! Didn’t they tell you that the leader is Don Crisostomo? Have you not seen him walking with the Governor General? What danger will we run?”

“And if we are killed?”

“What does it matter? Our father died from being whipped to death.”

“You are right.”

Both brothers sought Lucas in the crowd.

As soon as they caught sight of him, Tarsilo stopped.

“No! Let us go away from here! We are going to lose,” he exclaimed.

“Go if you wish. I am going to accept.”

“Bruno!”

Unfortunately, a man approached them and said:

“Are you betting? I am backing the *bulik*.”

The two brothers did not reply.

“I’ll give you odds.”

“How much?” asked Bruno.

The man counted out four *peso* pieces. Bruno looked at him, breathless.

“I have two hundred. Fifty to forty.”

“No,” said Bruno promptly. “Make it ...”

“All right! fifty to thirty.”

“Double it if you wish!”

“Well! The *bulik* is my winning color and I have just won. Hundred against sixty!”

“That’s a go! Wait till I go and get my money.”[181]

“But I will be the stake-holder,” said the other, in whom the manner of Bruno inspired little confidence.

“It’s all the same to me!” responded the latter, trusting in the strength of his fists.

And, turning to his brother, he said:

“Go away, if you wish; I’m going to stay.”

Then Tarsilo reflected. He loved his brother and the game. He could not leave him alone, and he murmured. “Let it be so!”

They approached Lucas. The latter saw them coming and smiled.

“Eh! there!” said Tarsilo.

“What is it?”

“How much do you give?” asked the two brothers.

“I have already told you. If you want to find some others to help us surprise the *cuartel*, I will give you thirty *pesos* apiece, and ten*pesos* for each companion you get. If all comes out well, each will receive one hundred *pesos* and you two, double that amount. Don Crisostomo is rich.”

“Accepted,” exclaimed Bruno. “Hand over the money.”

“I knew well that you were brave, like your father. Come! Don’t let them hear us or they will kill us,” said Lucas, pointing to the Civil Guards.

And taking them into a corner, he told them, as he counted out the money to them:

“To-morrow Don Crisostomo will arrive and bring arms. Day after to-morrow, about eight o’clock at night, come to the cemetery. I will tell you about the final arrangements. You have time to find some other companions.”

They took leave of each other. Now the two brothers seemed to have changed their rôles. Tarsilo was calm; Bruno, pale.[182]
[Contents]

Chapter XXVIII.
The Two Señoras.

While Captain Tiago was fighting his *lásak* against the *bulik*, Doña Victorina took a walk through the town, with the intention of seeing the condition of the indolent natives, and of their houses and fields. She had dressed as elegantly as she could, putting all her ribbons and flowers on her silk gown, in order to impress the provincials, and make them see how great a distance was between them and her sacred person. Giving her arm to her lame husband, she fluttered through the streets of the town, among the stupefied and wondering inhabitants. Cousin Linares had remained in the house.

"What ugly houses these natives have," began Doña Victorina, making a grimace. "I don't know how they can live there: one must be a native to do it. They meet us and don't uncover their heads! Hit them over the head as the curates and *tenientes* of the *Guardia Civil*do when they don't take off their hats. Teach them manners."

"And if they hit me?" asked Dr. de Espadaña.

"Aren't you a man?"

"Bu—bu—but, I am la—la—lame."

Doña Victorina was becoming bad-humored. The streets were not paved, and the train of her gown was covered with dust. Besides, they met many young women, who, on passing her, cast down their eyes and did not admire her lavish dress as they should have done. Sinang's coachman, who was driving her and her cousin in an elegant carriage, had the impudence to call out *tabi*1 to them in such a warning voice that she had to get out of the way, and was only able to exclaim, "Look at that brute of a coachman! I am going to tell his master that he should educate his servants better!"[183]
"Let us go back to the house," she ordered her husband.

He, fearing that there was going to be a storm, turned on his heels and obeyed the command.

They met the *alferez* on the way back and greeted him. He increased the discontent of Doña Victorina, for he not only failed to compliment her on her dress, but surveyed it almost with a mocking manner.

"You ought not to extend your hand to a simple *alferez*," said she to her husband as soon as they were some distance away. "He scarcely touches his helmet, and you take off your hat. You don't know how to maintain your rank."

"He is ch—ch—chief here!"

"And what does that matter to us? Are we, perchance, natives?"

"You are right," replied he, not wishing to quarrel.

They passed by the officer's house. Doña Consolacion was in the window, as usual, dressed in her flannel outfit and smoking her cigar. As the house was rather low, they could see each other as they passed, and Doña Victorina could distinguish her very well. The Muse of the *Guardia Civil* examined her with tranquillity from head to foot, and, afterward, sticking out her lower lip, spit, turning her face to the other side. That put an end to Doña Victorina's patience, and, leaving her husband without any support, she squared herself in front of the *alfereza*, trembling with rage, and unable to speak. Doña Consolacion turned her head slowly, looked her over again, and then spit again, but with still greater disdain.

"What is the matter with you, Doña?" said the *alfereza*.

"Can you tell me, Señora, why you look at me so? Are you envious?" Doña Victorina finally succeeded in saying.

"I envious of you?" said the Medusa with scorn. "O, yes! I envy those curls."

"Come, wife!" said the doctor. "Do—don't take no—no—notice of her!"

"Let me give this shameless common person a lesson!" replied the woman, giving her husband a push. He nearly fell to the ground. Turning to Doña Consolacion, she continued:

"Look how you treat me! Don't think that I am a provincial, or a soldiers' *querida*! In my house in Manila [184]*alferezas* never are allowed to

come in. They wait at the door."
"Oh-oh! Most Excellent Señora! *Alferezas* don't enter, but invalids like that out there. Ha, ha, ha!"

If it hadn't been for all the paint on her face, one could have seen Doña Victorina blush. She wanted to throw herself upon her enemy, but the sentry stopped her. In the meantime, the street was filling up with curious people.

"Listen! I lower myself talking with you. People of *categoría* ... Do you want my clothes to wash? I will pay you well. Do you think that I don't know that you are a washerwoman?"

Doña Consolacion became furious. The reference to her being a washerwoman wounded her.

"Do you think that we do not know what you are? Get out! My husband has already told me. Señora, I, at least, have not belonged to more than one man, but you? One must be pretty hard up to take the leavings."

This shot struck Doña Victorina square in the breast. She rolled up her sleeves, clenched her fists, and, gnashing her teeth, began:

"Come down here, you nasty old thing, that I may smash your filthy mouth."

The Medusa disappeared quickly from the window, but was soon seen coming down the stairs on a run, swinging her husband's whip.

Don Tiburcio interposed, pleading with them, but they would have come to blows if the *alferez* had not arrived.

"But, señoras!... Don Tiburcio!"

"Teach your woman better; buy her better clothes. If you haven't the money, rob the people. You have your soldiers for that!" shouted Doña Victorina.

"Señora," said the *alferez* furiously. "Thank yourself that I don't forget that you are a woman; for if you were not, I would kick you to pieces, with all your curls and ribbons."

"Se—se—señor *al—alferez*!" said Don Tiburcio.

“Go ahead! Kill us! You don’t wear big enough trousers, you quack.”

And so the battle waged: words, gestures, cries, insults, and injuries. They brought out all the nasty things they [185]could think of, all four speaking at the same time, and, saying so many things and bringing to light so many truths, that we will not relate here all that was said. The people who had gathered around to satisfy their curiosity, if they understood all the remarks, must have enjoyed themselves not a little. They were all waiting to see them come to blows. Unfortunately for the spectators, the curate came along and pacified them.

“Señoras! señoras! What a shame. Señor *alferez*.”

“What are you meddling in these matters for, you hypocrite, you Carlist?”

“Don Tiburcio, take away your wife! Señora, hold your tongue!”

“Tell that to those robbers of the poor!”

Finally, the dictionary of epithets was exhausted. The review of the disgraces of each couple was ended, and little by little they were separated, threatening and insulting each other. Father Salví kept going from one side to the other, adding life to the scene.

“This very day we will go to Manila and we will present ourselves to the Governor General,” said Doña Victorina, in fury to her husband. “You are not a man. It is a shame that you spend money for trousers.”

“B—b—but, wife, and the *Guardia Civil*? I—I—am lame.”

“You must challenge him to a duel with pistol or sword or, or——”

And Doña Victorina looked at his false teeth.

“Daughter, I never have used——”

Doña Victorina did not let him finish. With a sublime movement she jerked out his false teeth in the middle of the street, and throwing them to the ground stepped on them. He, half crying, and she sputtering away, arrived at the house. At that time, Linares was talking with Maria Clara, Sinang, and Victoria, and, as he knew nothing about the quarrel, the sudden arrival of his cousins gave him a shock. Maria Clara was lying on a sofa among

pillows and blankets, and was not a little surprised at the doctor's new physiognomy.

"Cousin," said Doña Victorina, "you have got to challenge the *alferez* immediately to a duel, or——"[186]
"And why? what for?" asked Linares, surprised.

"You challenge him right off, or I will tell them all who you are."

"But, Doña Victorina!"

The three young women looked at one another.

"The *alferez* has insulted us. The old witch came down with her whip, and that thing there allowed it all. A man!"

"Pshaw!" said Sinang. "They have been fighting and we haven't seen it."

"The *alferez* has broken the doctor's teeth," added Victoria.

"This very day we are going to Manila. You stay here to challenge him to a duel, and, if you don't, I'll tell Don Santiago that all that you have told him is a lie. I will tell him——"

"But, Doña Victorina! Doña Victorina!" interrupted Linares, pale and going closer to her. "You keep quiet. Don't make me call to mind"——and he added in a low voice—"Don't be imprudent, especially just now."

Just at that time, when this was going on, Captain Tiago arrived home from the cock-pit. He was downhearted. He had lost his *lásak*.

But Doña Victorina did not give him much time to sigh. In a few words, and with many insults, she related to him what had passed, she, of course, trying to put herself in a good light.

"Linares is going to challenge him. Do you hear? If he don't, I won't let him marry your daughter. Don't you permit it. If he has no courage, he does not merit Clarita."

"Then you are going to marry this gentleman?" asked Sinang, with her jolly eyes full of tears. "I knew that you were discreet, but I did not think you so fickle."

Maria Clara, pale as wax, raising herself half up, looked at her father with frightened eyes, and then at Doña Victorina and Linares. The latter turned red in the face, Captain Tiago looked down, and the señora added:

"Clarita, bear it in mind, and never marry a man who does not wear trousers. You expose yourself to insults like a dog, if you do."[187]
But the young maiden did not reply and said to her friends:

"Take me to my room, for I cannot go alone."

They helped her to her feet, and, leaning her marble-like head on pretty Sinang's shoulder, and, with the arms of her friend around her waist, she went to her bedroom.

That night the doctor and his wife collected their things together, submitted their account to Captain Tiago—which amounted to several thousand *pesos*—and very early on the following day, left for Manila in the Captain's carriage. To timid Linares they intrusted the rôle of the avenger.[188]

1Warning cry of a coachman, meaning "turn."

[Contents]

Chapter XXIX.
The Enigma.

As Lucas had announced, Ibarra arrived the next day. His first visit was to the family of Captain Tiago, with the object of seeing Maria Clara and telling her that His Most Illustrious Greatness had already reconciled him with the Church. He brought a letter of recommendation to the curate, written by the hand of the Archbishop himself. Aunt Isabel was not a little delighted over it, for she liked the young man and did not look favorably upon the marriage of her niece with Linares. Captain Tiago was not at home.

"Come in," said the aunt in her half-Castellano language. "Maria, Don Crisostomo is again in the grace of God. The Archbishop has dis-excommunicated him."

But the young man could not advance. His smile froze on his lips, and words fled from his mind. Linares was standing next to Maria Clara on the balcony, interweaving nosegays with the flowers and leaves on the climbing plants. On the floor, were scattered roses and *sampagas*. Maria Clara was leaning back on a sofa, pale, pensive, her look sad, playing with her ivory fan. But the fan was not as white as her poor fingers.

At the presence of Ibarra, Linares turned pale and Maria Clara's cheeks were tinged with carmine. She tried to rise, but her strength failing her, she cast her eyes upon the floor, and let fall her fan.

An embarrassing silence reigned for several seconds. Finally, Ibarra was able to advance, and tremblingly murmured:

"I have just arrived and have hastened to see you.... I find that you are better than I thought."

Maria Clara seemed to have turned dumb. She could [189]not pronounce a single word, and continued to keep her eyes on the floor.
Ibarra surveyed Linares with a look which the modest young man bore with considerable haughtiness.

“Well, I see that my arrival was not expected,” he said slowly. “Maria, pardon me for not having announced my coming. Some other day I will be able to explain to you my conduct.”

These words were accompanied with a look at Linares. The maiden raised her eyes to Ibarra, those beautiful eyes, full of purity and melancholy, so supplicating and sweet that Ibarra stopped confused.

“May I come to-morrow?”

“You know that on my part you are always welcome,” replied she, scarcely able to pronounce the words.

Ibarra walked away, apparently tranquil; but a tempest raged in his mind, and his heart was chilled. What he had just seen and felt was incomprehensible. What was it? Doubt, apathy or treason?

“Oh, woman!” he murmured.

He arrived, without noticing it, at the place where the school house was being constructed. The work was well along. Ñor Juan, with his yard stick and plumb-line, was going to and fro among the numerous workmen. On seeing the young man approach, he ran to meet him.

“Don Crisostomo,” said he, “you have arrived at last. We were all expecting you. Just see how the walls are rising. They are already a meter and ten centimeters high. Within two days, they will be as high as a man. I have not allowed them to use anything but the best of wood. Do you want to look at the cellar?”

The workmen saluted him respectfully.

“Here is the system of drainage which I have taken the liberty to add,” said Ñor Juan. “These underground canals lead to a cesspool about thirty feet off. It will serve to fertilize the garden. This was not in the plans. Do you object to it?”

“Quite on the contrary, I approve of it and I congratulate you on your idea. You are a true architect. From whom did you learn the profession?”

“From myself, señor,” replied the modest old man.[190]

“O, yes! Before I forget it: let the scrupulous people know (for some may fear to speak to me) that I am no longer excommunicated. The Archbishop invited me to dine with him.”

“Pshaw! señor! We don’t take any notice of excommunications. We are all excommunicated. Dather Dámaso is himself; however, he goes on, as fat as ever.”

“How’s that?”

“I feel sure about it. A year ago he gave the coadjutor a blow with his cane, and the coadjutor is as much a priest as he. Who takes any notice of excommunications, señor?”

Ibarra caught sight of Elias among the workmen. He saluted him like the others, but with a look that gave Ibarra to understand that he wanted to speak with him.

“Ñor Juan,” said Ibarra, “will you bring me a list of the workmen?”

Ñor Juan disappeared and Ibarra approached Elias, who was alone, raising a large stone and loading it in a cart.

“If you are able, señor, to grant me some hours of conversation, come this afternoon to the shore of the lake and embark in my *banca*, for I want to talk with you about some serious matters,” said Elias. Ibarra gave a nod of assent and went away.

Ñor Juan brought the list, but Ibarra read it in vain. The name of Elias was not on it.[191]
[Contents]

Chapter XXX.
The Voice of the Persecuted.

Before the sun went down, Ibarra put his foot into Elias's *banca* on the shore of the lake. He seemed displeased about something, as though he had been opposed or contradicted.

"Pardon me, señor," said Elias on seeing him. "Pardon me for having ventured to make this appointment with you. I would like to speak with you freely, and here we have no witnesses. We can return within an hour."

"You are mistaken, friend Elias," replied Ibarra, trying to smile. "You will have to take me to that town over there, where you see that belfry. Fate obliges me to go there."

"Fate?"

"Yes; on my way here, I met the *alferez*. He insisted upon accompanying me. I thought about you, and knew that he would recognize you, and, in order to get rid of him, I told him that I was going to that town. Now I will have to remain there all day to-morrow, for the man whom I am going to see will not look for me till to-morrow afternoon."

"I am obliged to you for your thoughtfulness, but you might have simply told him to accompany you," replied Elias with naturalness.

"How's that? And what about you?"

"He would never have recognized me. The only time that he ever saw me, I don't believe that he thought to take down a description of me."

"I am in hard luck!" sighed Ibarra, thinking of Maria Clara. "What have you to say to me?"

Elias looked around him. They were far from the shore. The sun had already sunk below the horizon, and, as the twilight in these latitudes is very short, the darkness was [192]falling over the earth, and the disk of the full moon was already shining.

"Señor," replied Elias, in a grave voice, "I am the spokesman of many unfortunate people."

“Unfortunate people. What do you mean?”

In a few words, Elias referred to the conversation which he had had with the chief of the *tulisanes*, but omitted saying anything about the doubts which the chief entertained, or the threats. Ibarra listened attentively, and, when Elias concluded his story, a long silence reigned. Ibarra was the first to break the spell.

“So that they desire——?”

“Radical reforms in the armed forces, in the religious matters, and in the administration of justice. That is to say, they ask for paternal care on the part of the Government.”

“Reforms? In what sense?”

“For example: more respect for human dignity; more security for the individual; less power in the hands of the forces already armed; fewer privileges for that body which easily abuses them.”

“Elias,” replied the young man, “I don’t know who you are, but I believe that you are not an ordinary man. You think and work differently from the others. You will understand me if I say to you that, even if it is true that the present state of affairs is defective, there will be a worse state if there is a change. I could arrange to get the assistance of my friends in Madrid, by *paying them*. I could speak to the Governor General, but all of that would accomplish nothing. He has not enough power to introduce reforms, nor would I ever take a step in that direction, for I know very well that, if it is true that these religious corporations have their defects, they are now necessities. They are what you might call a necessary evil.”

Elias raised his head and looked astonished.

“Do you believe, señor, in necessary evils?” he asked, his voice slightly trembling. “Do you believe that in order to do good it is necessary to do evil?”

“No. I look upon it as a violent remedy which we have to make use of to cure an illness. To illustrate further, the country is an organism which is suffering from a [193]chronic illness, and, in order to cure it, the Government

finds itself compelled to use medicines, hard and violent, if you wish, but useful and necessary."

"He is a bad doctor, señor, who seeks to cure the symptoms and suppress them without trying to find the origin of the illness, or knowing it, fears to attack it. The *Guardia Civil* has no other end than this: the suppression of crime by terror and force. This end it neither fulfills nor carries out except in chance instances. And you have to take into account that society can be severe with individuals only after she has furnished all means necessary for their perfect morality. In our country, since there is no society, since the people and the Government do not form a unity, the latter ought to be indulgent, not only because indulgence is necessary, but because the individual, neglected and abandoned by Government, has less self responsibility than if he had been enlightened. Besides, following out your comparison, the medicine applied to the evils of the country is so much of a destroyer that its effect is only felt on the sane parts of the organism. These it weakens and injures. Would it not be more reasonable to fortify and strengthen the infirm organism and minimize a little the violence of the medicine?"

"To weaken the *Guardia Civil* would be to put the security of the towns in danger."

"The security of the towns!" exclaimed Elias with bitterness. "The towns have had the *Guardia Civil* for nearly fifteen years and what is the result? We still have *tulisanes*, we still hear of them sacking towns, and they still make their attacks on people on the roads. Robberies continue and the robbers are not punished. Crime exists and the real criminal goes free, but not so with the peaceful inhabitants of the town. Ask any honorable citizen if he looks upon this institution as a good, as a protection by the Government, or as an imposition, a despotism whose excesses do more harm than the violence of the criminals. Communication between people is paralyzed, for they fear to be maltreated for trifling causes. More importance is attached to the formality of the law than to the basal principle of it,—the first symptom of incapacity in government. The heads of the organization consider it their [194]first duty to make people salute them, either of their own will or by force, even in the darkness of night. In this, their inferior officers imitate them and maltreat and fleece the poor countrymen. There is no such thing as sacredness of the fireside. There is

no security for the individual. What have the people accomplished by overcoming their wrath and by waiting for justice at the hands of others? Ah! señor, if you call that preserving the order——”

“I agree with you that there are evils,” replied Ibarra. “But we have to accept those evils for the good which accompanies them. This institution may be imperfect, but believe me, by the terror which it inspires, it prevents the number of criminals from increasing.”

“You might better say that by that terror it increases the number of criminals,” said Elias, correcting him. “Before this body was created, almost all the evildoers, with the exception of a very few, were criminals because of their hunger. They pillaged and robbed in order to live. That famine once passed over and hunger once satisfied, the roads were again free from criminals. It was sufficient to have the poor but valiant *cuaderilleros* chase them, with their imperfect arms—that body of men so often calumniated by those who have written upon our country, those men who have three legal rights, to do their duty, to fight and to die. And for all that, a jest as recompense. Now there are *tulisanes* who will be *tulisanes* all their lives. A crime inhumanly punished, resistance against the excesses of the power which inflicts such punishment, and fear that other atrocities may be inflicted—these make them forever members of that society who are bound by oath to kill and die[1]. The terrorism of the *Guardia Civil* impressed upon them closes forever the doors to repentance. And as a *tulisan* fights and defends himself in the mountains better than a soldier, whom he scorns, the result is that we are incapable of abating the evil which we have created. Call to mind what the prudent Governor General de la Torre did. The amnesty which he granted to these unhappy people has proved that in these mountains the hearts of [195]men still beat, and only await pardon. Terrorism is useful only when the people are enslaved, when the mountains have no caverns, when the governing power can station a sentry behind every tree, and when the slave has in his body nothing but a stomach. But when the desperado who fights for his life feels the strong arm of that power, then his heart beats and his being fills with passion. Can terrorism put out the fire which——”

“It confuses me, Elias, to hear you talk so. I would believe that you were right if I did not have my own convictions. But note this point—and do not be offended, for I do not include you—I look upon you as an exception—

consider who those are who ask for this reform. Almost all are criminals or people who are in the way of becoming such."

"Criminals or future criminals; but why are they so? Because their peace has been disturbed, their happiness taken away from them, their dearest affections wounded, and, after asking protection from Justice, they have been convinced that they can secure it only by their own hands, by their own efforts. But you are mistaken, señor, if you believe that only criminals ask for it. Go from town to town, from house to house. Listen to the secret sighings of the family and you will be convinced that the evils which the *Guardia Civil*causes are equal to if not greater than those which it corrects. Would you conclude then that all the citizens are criminals? Then, why defend them from the others? Why not destroy them?"

"There is some flaw in your reasoning which escapes me now. In Spain, the Mother Country, this body lends and has lent very useful services."

"I do not doubt it. Perhaps there it is better organized; the personnel more select. Perhaps, too, Spain needs such a body, but the Philippines do not. Our customs, our mode of living, which are always cited when any one wants to deny us a right, are totally forgotten when some one wants to impose something on us. And tell me, señor, why have not other nations adopted this institution, other nations which resemble Spain more than do the Philippines? Is it due to the efforts of such an institution that other nations have fewer robberies of the railways, fewer [196]riots, fewer assassinations, and less hand-to-hand fighting in their great capitals?"
Ibarra bowed his head in meditation. Afterward he raised it and replied:

"That question, my friend, needs serious study. If my investigations tell me that these complaints are well founded, I will write to my friends in Madrid, since we have no deputies to represent us. In the meantime, believe me, the Government needs a body like the*Guardia Civil*, which has unlimited power, in order to make the people respect its authority and the laws imposed."

"That would be all right, señor, if the Government were at war with the country; but, for the good of the Government, we ought not to make the people believe that they are in opposition to the law. Furthermore, if that were the case, if we preferred force to prestige, we ought to look well to

whom we give this unlimited force or power, this authority. Such great power in the hands of men, and ignorant men at that, men full of passion, without moral education, without tested honor—such a thing is a weapon in the hands of a maniac in a multitude of unarmed people. I grant and I will agree with you that the Government needs this weapon, but let it choose that weapon well; let it choose the most worthy men to bear it."

Elias was speaking with enthusiasm and with fervor. His eyes glistened and his voice vibrated. Then followed a solemn pause. The*banca*, no longer propelled by the paddle, floated tranquilly on the waves. The moon was shining majestically from a sapphire sky. Some lights were glimmering on the shore.

"And what more do they ask?" said Ibarra.

"Reforms in the priesthood," responded Elias, in a discouraged and sad tone of voice. "The unfortunates ask more protection against——"

"Against the religious orders?"

"Against their oppressors, señor."

"Have the Filipinos forgotten what they owe to these orders? Have they forgotten the immense debt of gratitude they owe to them for having saved them from error and given them the Faith? What they owe to them for protection against the civil power? Here is one of the [197]evils which result from not teaching the history of the country in our schools."
Elias, surprised, could scarcely give credit to what he heard.

"Señor," he replied in a grave voice. "You accuse the people of ingratitude: permit me, one of those who suffer, to defend the people. Favors, in order to be recognized as such, must be done by persons with disinterested motives. Let us consider in a general way the mission of the orders, of Christian charity, that threadbare subject. Let us lay history aside. Let us not ask what Spain did with the Jews, who gave all Europe a Book, a religion and a God! Let us not ask what Spain has done with the Arabic people who gave her culture, who were tolerant in religion and who reawakened in her a pure national love, fallen into lethargy and almost destroyed by the domination of Romans and Goths. Let us omit all that. Do you say that these orders have given us the Faith and have saved us from error? Do you call those

outward ceremonies, faith? Do you call that commerce in straps and scapularies religion? Do you call those miracles and stories which we hear every day truth? Is that the law of Jesus Christ? To teach such a faith as this it was not at all necessary that a God should allow himself to be crucified. Superstition existed long before the friars came here; it was only necessary to perfect it and to raise the price of the traffic. Will you tell me that although our religion of to-day is imperfect, it is better than that which we had before? I will agree with you in that and grant it; but we have purchased it at too high a price if we have had to renounce our nationality and independence for it; when for it, we have given to the priests our best towns, our fields, and still give them our little savings in order to buy religious objects. A foreign industry has been introduced among us; we pay well for it, and are in peace. If you speak of the protection they have afforded us against the civil governors of the provinces, I would reply that through them we fall under the power of these governors. However, I recognize that a true Faith, and a true love for humanity guided the first missionaries who came to our shores. I recognize the debt of gratitude which is due those noble hearts. I know that [198]in those days Spain abounded in heroes of all kinds, as well in religion as in politics, as well in civil life as in military. But because the forefathers were virtuous, should we consent to the abuses practiced by their degenerate descendants? Because a great good has been done for us, are we guilty if we prevent ourselves from being harmed? The country does not ask for abolition of the priesthood; it only asks for reforms which new circumstances and new needs require."
"I love our country as you love it, Elias. I understand to some extent what you desire. I have heard with attention what you have said; yet, despite all of that, my friend, I believe we are looking upon it with a little prejudice. Here, less than in other things, I see the necessity of reforms."

"Can it be possible, señor," said Elias, discouraged and stretching out his hands. "Do you not see the necessity of reforms, you whose family——"

"Ah! I forget myself and I forget my own injuries for the sake of the security of the Philippines, for the sake of the interests of Spain," interrupted Ibarra eagerly. "To preserve the Philippines it is necessary that the friars continue as they are, and in union with Spain lies the welfare of our country."

Ibarra had ceased speaking, but Elias continued to listen. His face was sad, his eyes had lost their brilliancy.

“The missionaries conquered the country, it is true,” he said. “Do you think that Spain will be able to keep the Philippines through the instrumentality of the friars?”

“Yes, only through the friars. This is the belief held by all who have written on the Philippines.”

“Oh!” exclaimed Elias, discouraged and throwing his paddle into the bottom of the *banca*. “I did not think that you had so poor a conception of the Government and of the country.”

Ibarra replied: “I love our country, not only because it is the duty of all men to love the country to which they owe their being, not only because my father taught me so; but also because my mother was a native, an Indian, and because all my most beautiful memories live in these [199]islands. I love it too, because I owe it my happiness and will continue to do so.”
“And I, I love it because I owe to it my misfortunes,” said Elias.

“Yes, my friend, I know that you are suffering, that you are unfortunate, and that this makes you see a dark future and influences your way of thinking. For this reason, I make allowance for your complaints. If I were able to appreciate the motives, if I had known part of that past——”

“My misfortunes have another source. If I had known that they would have been of usefulness, I would have related them, for aside from that, I make no secret of them. They are well enough known by many.”

“Perhaps knowing them would rectify my opinions. You know I do not rely much upon theories; facts are better guides.”

Elias remained pensive for some moments.

“If that is the case, señor,” he replied, “I will relate briefly the history of my misfortunes.”[200]

1Author here shows difficulty in establishing American sovereignty over islands by military forces.

[Contents]

Chapter XXXI.
Elias's Family.

"Some sixty years ago my grandfather lived in Manila and kept books for a Spanish merchant. My grandfather was then very young, but was married and had a son. One night, without any one knowing the cause, the store-house was burned. The fire spread to the store and from the store to many others. The losses were very heavy. Search was made for the incendiary, and the merchant accused my grandfather. In vain he protested and, as he was poor and could not pay celebrated lawyers, he was condemned to be whipped publicly and to be led through the streets of Manila. It was not a great while ago that this infamous punishment was still in use here. It was a thousand times worse than death itself. My grandfather, abandoned by everybody except his wife, was tied to a horse and, followed by a cruel multitude, was whipped on every corner, in the sight of men, his brothers, and in the vicinity of the numerous temples of the God of Peace. When the unfortunate man, disgraced forever, had satisfied the punishment by his blood, his tortures and his cries, they untied him from the horse, for he had become unconscious. Would to God he had died! As a refined cruelty, they gave him liberty. His wife, embarrassed with a child at the time, begged in vain from door to door for work or alms that she might care for her sick husband and the poor son. But who would have confidence in the wife of an infamous man guilty of arson? The wife, then, had to give herself up to prostitution."

Ibarra started from his seat.

"Oh! do not be disturbed! Prostitution was not the only dishonor which she and her husband suffered. Honor and shame no longer existed for them. The husband cured his wounds, and, with his wife and son, hid in the mountains of this province. Here the woman brought [201]forth a still-born child, deformed and full of disease. In the mountains, they lived for several months, miserable, isolated, hated and fleeing from all. Unable to endure the misery, less valorous than his wife, and growing desperate at seeing her ill and deprived of all aid and comfort, my grandfather hanged himself. The body rotted in the sight of the son, who was now scarcely able to take care of his sick mother. The bad odor of the rotting corpse disclosed it to Justice.

My grandmother was accused and condemned for not having given notice. The death of her husband was attributed to her and people believed it. For, what is a wife of a wretch not capable of doing after having prostituted herself? If she took oath, they said she perjured herself; if she wept, they said that it was false; and if she invoked God, they said she blasphemed. However, they had some consideration for her and waited for her to give birth to a child before whipping her. You know that the friars spread the belief that the only way to deal with the natives is with the whip. Read what Father Gaspar de San Augustin says.

"Thus condemned, the woman cursed the day when she would give birth to the child, and this not only prolonged her punishment, but violated her maternal sentiments. The woman delivered the child, and unfortunately the child was born robust. Two months later the sentence of whipping which had been imposed upon her was carried out, to the great satisfaction of the people, who thought that in this way they were fulfilling their duty. No longer able to be at peace in these mountains she fled with her two sons to a neighboring province and there they lived like wild beasts: hating and hated. The older boy, remembering his happy infancy and its contrast with such great misery, became a *tulisan* as soon as he had sufficient strength. Before long the bloody name of *Bálat* extended from province to province; it was the terror of the towns and the people, for he took his revenge with fire and blood. The younger boy, who had received from Nature a good heart, resigned himself to his lot at his mother's side. They lived on what the forests afforded them; they dressed in the rags that travellers threw away. The mother had lost her good name, she was now [202]known only by such titles as the 'criminal,' the 'prostitute,' and the 'horse-whipped woman.' The younger brother was known only as the son of his mother, because he had such a pleasant disposition that they did not believe him to be the son of the incendiary. Finally the famous Bálat fell one day into the hands of Justice. Society had taught him no good, but he was asked to account for his crimes. One morning as the younger boy was looking for his mother, who had gone to gather mushrooms from the forest, and had not yet returned, he found her lying on the ground by the roadside, under a cotton-tree. Her face was turned toward the sky, her eyes were torn from their sockets, and her rigid fingers were buried in the blood-stained earth. It occurred to the young man to raise his eyes and follow the direction in

which his mother had been looking, and there from a limb of a tree he saw a basket, and in that basket the bloody head of his brother."
"My God!" exclaimed Ibarra.

"That is what my father must have exclaimed," continued Elias, coldly. "The men had cut the highwayman into quarters and buried him in a trunk of a tree. But the limbs were saved, and were hung up in different towns. If you go some time from Calamba to Santo Tomás you will still find the rotting leg of my uncle hanging from a *lomboy* tree. Nature has cursed the tree and it neither grows nor gives fruit. They did the same thing with the other members of his body, but the head, the head, as the best part of the man and that part which can be most easily recognized, they hung before the mother's cabin."

Ibarra bowed his head.

"The young man fled like one that is accursed," continued Elias. "He fled from town to town, through mountains and valleys, and when at last he thought he was not recognized by any one, he began to work in the store of a rich man in the province of Tayabas. His activity, his agreeable disposition, won for him the esteem of those who did not know his past life. By working and saving he managed to make a little capital, and, as the misery had passed away, and, as he was young, he thought that he would be happy. His good appearance, his youth, and [203]his quite unencumbered position won for him the love of a girl in the town, but he did not dare to ask for her hand, for fear that she might learn of his past. But love became too strong and both erred. The man, in order to save the honor of the woman, risked all; he asked her to marry him, the papers were looked up and all was disclosed. The girl's father was rich and began to prosecute the man. The latter, however, did not try to defend himself, admitted it all and was sent to jail. The young woman gave birth to a boy and a girl. They were brought up in seclusion and made to believe that their father was dead. This was not difficult, for while the children were still young they saw their mother die, and they thought little about investigating their genealogy. As our grandfather was very rich, our youth was happy. My sister and I were educated together, we loved each other as only twins can when they know no other love. While very young, I went to study in the Jesuit College, and my sister, in order that we might not be entirely

separated, went to the Concordia boarding school. Our short education having been ended, for we only wished to be farmers, we returned to the town to take possession of the inheritance which was left us by our grandfather. We lived happily for some time; the future smiled on us; we had many servants; our fields bore good crops; and my sister was on the eve of being married to a young man who loved her and to whom she was well suited. On account of some pecuniary questions, and, because my character was then haughty, I lost the good will of a distant relative, and he threw in my face one day my dark birth and my infamous ancestry. I thought it a calumny and demanded satisfaction. The tomb in which so much grief was sleeping was opened again and the truth came out. I was confounded. To make the misfortune greater, we had had for some years an old servant who had always suffered all my caprices without ever leaving us. He contented himself by weeping and crying while the other servants jested with him. I do not know how my relative found it out; the fact is that he summoned this old man before the court and made him tell the truth. The old servant was my father, who had stuck fast to his dear children and whom I had maltreated [204]many times. Our happiness disappeared: I renounced our fortune; my sister lost her lover; and with our father we abandoned the town to go to some other point. The thought of having contributed to our disgrace and misfortune, cut short the life of the old man, from whose lips was learned all the sorrowful past. My sister and I were left alone.

"She wept a great deal, but, amid such grief as they piled upon us, she could not forget her love. Without complaining, without saying a word, she saw her old lover marry another girl, and I saw her a little later gradually become ill, without being able to console her. One day she disappeared. In vain I searched for her everywhere; in vain I asked for her for six months. Afterward I learned that during the time while I was searching for her, one day when the water had risen in the lake, there had been found on the beach at Calamba the body of a girl, either drowned or assassinated. She had, they say, a knife piercing her breast. The authorities of Calamba published the fact in the neighboring towns. Nobody presented himself to claim the body; no young woman had disappeared. From the description which they gave me afterward, from the dress, the rings, the beauty of her face and her very abundant hair, I recognized her as my poor sister. From that time, I have been wandering from province to province. My fame and history are in the mouths of many people; they attribute all sorts of deeds to me; at times they

calumniate me; but I take no notice of men and continue on my way. I have here briefly related my history, and that of a judgment at the hands of mankind."

Elias became silent and continued rowing.

"I believe that you are not wrong," murmured Ibarra, in a low voice, "when you say that justice ought to procure the welfare of the people by lifting up the criminals and by raising the standard of their morality. Only ... that is impossible—a Utopia. And then, where is the money for so many new employees to come from?"

"And what are the priests for, the priests who proclaim peace and charity as their mission? Is it more meritorious for a priest to wet the head of a child, to give [205]it salt to eat, than to awaken in the darkened conscience of a criminal that spark, given by God to every man, that he may seek to do good? Is it more human to accompany a criminal to the gallows than to accompany him through the difficult path which leads from vice to virtue? Are not spies, executioners and *Guardias Civiles* paid? The latter institution, besides being an evil, also costs money."
"My friend, neither you nor I, although we wish it, can accomplish it."

"Alone we are nothing, it is true. Take up the cause of the people, unite them, listen to their voices, give others an example to follow, give them the idea of what is called a fatherland, a *patria*!"

"What the people ask for is impossible. We must wait."

"To wait, to wait, is equivalent to suffering!"

"If I should ask it, they would laugh at me."

"And if the people should sustain you?"

"Never! I would never be the one to lead the multitude and accomplish by force what the Government does not believe is opportune. No! If I ever saw the multitude armed for such a purpose, I would put myself on the side of the Government. And I would fight it, for in such a mob I would not see my country. I wish for its welfare: that is the reason that I am erecting the school-house. I look for it through means of instruction, education and progress. Without light there is no road."

“Nor without fighting is there liberty,” replied Elias.

“I do not care for that kind of liberty.”

“Without liberty there is no light,” replied the pilot with enthusiasm. “You say that you know very little about our country. I believe it. You do not see the fight that is impending. You do not see the cloud on the horizon. The combat begins in the sphere of ideas, and then descends to the arena to tinge it with blood. I hear the voice of God. Woe to them who resist it. History has not been written for them.”

Elias was transformed. As he stood up, his head uncovered, his manly face illumined by the moonlight, there was something extraordinary about him. He shook his long hair and continued:[206]
“Do you not see how all is awakening? Sleep has lasted for centuries, but one day a thunderbolt will fall and new life will be called forth. New tendencies are animating the spirits, and these tendencies to-day separated, will be united some day, and will be guided by God. God has not failed other peoples, nor will he fail ours. Their cause is liberty.”

A solemn silence followed these words. In the meantime, the *banca* carried along imperceptibly by the waves, neared the shore. Elias was the first to break the silence.

“What have I to say to those who have sent me?” he asked, changing the tone of his voice.

“I have already told you that I greatly deplore their condition, but for them to wait, since evils are not cured by other evils. In our misfortune, we are all at fault.”

Elias did not insist further. He bowed his head, continued rowing and, bringing the *banca* up to the shore, took leave of Ibarra saying:

“I thank you, Señor, for your condescension. For your own interests I ask you in the future to forget me, and never to recognize me in whatever place you may meet me.”

And saying this, he turned his *banca* and rowed in the direction of a dense thicket on the beach. He seemed to observe only the millions of diamonds

which his paddle lifted and which fell back into the lake, where they soon disappeared in the mystery of the blue waves.

Finally, he arrived at the place toward which he had been rowing. A man came out of the thicket and approached him:

“What shall I tell the captain?” he asked.

“Tell him that Elias, if he does not die before, will fulfill his word,” he replied gloomily.

“Then when will you meet us?”

“When your captain thinks that the hour of danger has come.”

“All right. Good-bye!”

“If I do not die before,” murmured Elias.[207]
[Contents]

Chapter XXXII.
Changes.

The modest Linares was serious and very uneasy. He had just received a letter from Doña Victorina which, translated from the most illiterate Spanish, and omitting its many errors in spelling and punctuation, was as follows:

"ESTEEMED COUSIN:—Within three days I want to know from you if you have killed the *alferez* or he you. I don't want another day to pass without this animal being punished. If this length of time passes and still you have not challenged him, I will tell Don Santiago that you never were secretary and that you never joked with Canovas or with General Martinez. I will tell Clarita that it is all a lie and I will not give you another *cuarto*. If you challenge him, I promise you all that you wish. If you do not challenge him, I will accept no excuses or reasons.

"Your cousin who loves you in her heart.
"VICTORINA DE LOS REYES DE DE ESPADAÑA.
"Sampalog, Monday Eve, 7 o'clock."

It was a serious matter. Linares knew Doña Victorina's character and knew what she was capable of doing. To reason with her was out of the question; to beg was useless; to deceive her worse. There was no other remedy than to challenge.

"But what can I do?" he said to himself, as he was walking alone. "If he receives me harshly? If I meet his wife? Who would want to be my second? The curate? Captain Tiago? Cursed be the hour in which I gave ear to her advice! What will this señorita say about me? Now I am sorry to have been secretary to all the ministers."[208]
The good Linares was in this sad soliloquy when Father Salví arrived. The Franciscan was certainly thinner and paler than usual, but his eyes shone with a peculiar light and a strange smile was seen on his lips.

"Señor Linares, all alone?" saluted the priest and directed his steps to the *sala*, through the half open door of which notes of the piano were heard.

Linares restrained a smile.

"And Don Santiago?" added the curate.

Captain Tiago presented himself at that moment, kissed the curate's hand, took the Father's hat and cane and smiled like one who had been blessed.

“Well, well!” said the curate, going into the *sala*, followed by Linares and Captain Tiago. “I have good news from Manila which you will all enjoy. I have received letters from Manila which confirm the one which Señor Ibarra brought me yesterday—so that, Don Santiago, the impediment is removed.”

Maria Clara was seated at the piano between her two girl friends. She half rose to her feet at this remark, but her strength failed her and she sat down again. Linares turned pale and looked at Captain Tiago, who turned his eyes to the floor.

“This young man really seems to me a very nice fellow,” continued the curate. “At first, I judged him bad—he is a little quick-tempered. But he knows so well how to atone for his faults afterward, that one cannot hold any grudge against him. If it were not for Father Dámaso....” And the curate directed a quick glance at Maria Clara. She was listening to all that was going on but without taking her eyes off the music—in spite of the concealed pinches which Sinang gave her to express her joy. Had she been alone, she would have danced.

“Father Dámaso?” asked Linares without finishing the sentence.

“Yes,” continued the curate. “Father Dámaso has said that as ... godfather he could not permit ... but I believe that if finally, Señor Ibarra asks pardon, which I do not doubt he will do, all will be arranged.”

Maria Clara arose, made an excuse and retired to her room, accompanied by Victoria.[209]
“And if Father Dámaso does not pardon him?” asked Captain Tiago, in a low voice.

“Then Maria Clara will see that Father Dámaso is her spiritual father. But I believe that they will come to an understanding.”

At that moment, steps were heard and Ibarra appeared, followed by Aunt Isabel. His presence on the scene produced a varied effect. He saluted Captain Tiago affably, the latter not knowing whether to smile or to weep; to Linares he bowed profoundly. Father Salví arose and extended his hand to him so affectionately that Ibarra could not suppress a look of surprise.

“Do not think it strange,” said Father Salví. “I was just paying you a compliment.”

Ibarra thanked him and approached Sinang.

“Where have you been all day?” she asked, with a childish laugh. “We have been asking each other, ‘Where could this soul redeemed from purgatory have gone?’ Each one of us gave a different answer.”

“And will you not tell what you said?”

“No, that is a secret; but I will surely tell you in private. Now tell us where you have been so that we can see who has been able to guess it.”

“No, that also is a secret; but I will tell you alone, if the señores will permit.”

“Certainly, certainly!” said Father Salví.

Sinang took Crisostomo to one end of the hall. She was very happy with the idea of knowing a secret.

“Tell me, my little friend,” said Ibarra, “Is Maria angry with me?”

“I do not know, but she says that it is better that you should forget her and then begins to cry. Captain Tiago wants her to marry that gentleman; Father Dámaso also wishes it; but she says neither yes nor no. This morning when we were asking for you, I said: ‘What if he has gone to make love to some one else?’ She replied to me: ‘Would to God that he had!’ and then began to cry.”

Ibarra was serious.

“Tell Maria that I want to speak with her alone.”

“Alone?” asked Sinang, knitting her eyebrows and looking at him.[210]
“Entirely alone, no. But so that we may not be seen by that other señor.”

“It is difficult, but don’t worry. I will tell her.”

“And when will I know the answer?”

“To-morrow come to the house early. Maria never wants to be alone. We keep her company. Victoria sleeps by her side one night, and I the next. To-morrow night it is my turn. But listen: What is the secret? You are going without telling me the principal thing.”

“That is true. I was in the town of Los Baños. I went up there to do some business in cocoanut trees, since I am thinking of building a factory. Your father will be my partner.”

“Nothing more than that? Give us the secret!” exclaimed Sinang in a loud voice and in the tone of a defrauded usurer. “I thought——”

“Take care. I don’t want you to tell it.”

“I have no desire to!” replied Sinang, sticking up her nose. “If it were something more important, I would tell it to my friends. But to buy cocoanuts! cocoanuts! Who is interested in cocoanuts?”

And she went away in haste to find her girl friends.

A few moments afterward, Ibarra seeing that the conversation was lagging, took leave of the gathering. Captain Tiago’s expression was between sweet and sour; Linares was silent and observing; and the curate, feigning to be joyful, was telling stories. None of the girls had returned.[211]
[Contents]

Chapter XXXIII.
Playing Cards with the Shades.

A cloudy sky hides the moon, and a cold wind, the omen of approaching December, whirls the dry leaves and dust in the narrow path leading to the cemetery.

Under the gate, three forms are conversing in a low tone.

“Have you spoken to Elias?” asked a voice.

“No; you know he is very odd and discreet. But he ought to be with us. Don Crisostomo saved his life.”

“I accepted the offer for the same reason,” said the first voice. “Don Crisostomo is having my wife treated at a doctor’s house in Manila. I have agreed to take charge of the convent in the attack, so that I can settle my accounts with the curate.”

“And we, we will have charge of the attack on the *cuartel*, so that we can say to the members of the *Guardia Civil* that our father had sons.”

“How many will there be of you?”

“Five! Five will be enough. Don Crisostomo’s servant says that there will be twenty in all.”

“And if things don’t turn out well?”

“St!” said one, and they all became silent.

In the semi-darkness, a form could be seen crawling along the fence. From time to time it stopped, as if to look behind.

And it did so not without reason. Behind, at some twenty paces, came another form. This one was taller and seemed to be darker than the first. Each time that the first stopped this second one would disappear as if the earth had swallowed it.

“They are following me,” murmured the one ahead. “Is it a *Guardia Civil?* Has the sacristan lied?”

“It appears that the appointment is here,” said the second, [212]in a low voice. “They are up to something bad, when the two brothers hide it from me.”
The first form finally arrived at the gate of the cemetery. The three who were already there advanced.

“Is it you?”

“Is it you?”

“Let us separate. Some one is following me. To-morrow we will have the arms and to-morrow night will be our time. The cry is ‘Viva Don Crisostomo!’ Begone!”

The three persons disappeared behind the wall. The recent arrival hid himself in the hollow of the gate and waited silently.

“Let’s see who is following me!” he murmured.

The second person came along very cautiously, and stopped to look around.

“I have arrived late!” said he in a half intelligible voice. “But perhaps they will return.”

And, as a fine rain began to fall and threatened to continue, he took refuge under the gate. Naturally, he met the other.

“Ah! who are you?” asked the one who had just come up, in a manly voice.

“And who are you?” replied the other tranquilly.

There was a moment’s pause. Each tried to recognize the other by the tone of his voice and to distinguish the other’s features.

“What are you waiting here for?” asked the one with the heavy voice.

“Till the clock strikes eight, so as to have a game of cards with the dead. I want to win some money to-night,” replied the other, in an ordinary tone. “And you: what do you come here for?”

“A—a—for the same thing.”

“Well! I am glad. So I will not be without a companion. I have brought some cards. At the first stroke of the bell, I put down the *albur*(the first two cards put on the board in monte). At the second stroke, I put down the *gallo* (the second pair). The cards which move after I have put them down, are those which the dead choose for themselves. Did you also bring some cards?”

“No.”[213]
“Then?”

“It is simple. Just as you act as ‘banker’ for them, so I hope that they will ‘bank’ for me.” (In monte the banker deals the cards and bets that one of the cards in either the *albur* or *gallo* is turned up by dealing off the pack, before the card chosen by the other person is turned up. A banker can play against two others.)

“And if the shades do not care to ‘bank’?”

“What can be done? The game is not obligatory upon the dead.”

There was a moment’s silence.

“Did you come armed? What if you have to fight with the shades of the dead?”

“I’ll use my fists,” replied the taller of the two.

“Ah! The devil! Now, I remember! The dead do not bet when there is more than one live person around. There are two of us.”

“Is that true? Well, I don’t want to go away.”

“Nor I. I need some money,” replied the smaller one. “But let us do this: We will decide by the cards which one shall go away.”

“All right!” replied the other, showing a certain amount of displeasure.

“Then let us go in. Have you any matches?”

They entered the cemetery and in the obscurity they searched for a place where they might decide the question with the cards. They soon found a niche upon which they sat down. The shorter one took from his hat some playing cards and the other lighted a match.

Each one looked at the other in the light which the match made, but, judging from the expression on their faces, they did not recognize each other. However, we can recognize in the taller one, the one with the manly voice, Elias; and in the smaller one, Lucas, with the scar on his cheek.

“Cut the cards!” said the latter, without ceasing to look at the other.

He pushed aside some bones which were found on the niche and turned up an ace and a jack for the *albur*. Elias lighted one match after another.

“On the jack!” said he and, in order to show which of [214]the cards he was betting on, he placed upon it a piece of vertebræ.
“I deal!” said Lucas and, after turning up four or five cards, an ace came up.

“You have lost,” he added. “Now leave me alone so that I may win some money.”

Elias, without saying a word, disappeared in the darkness.

Some minutes afterward, the clock in the church struck eight and the bell announced the hour of prayer. But Lucas did not invite anybody to play with him. He did not call out the shades, as superstition demanded. Instead, he uncovered his head, murmured some prayers and crossed himself with the same fervor as the chief of the Brotherhood of the Most Sacred Rosary would have done at that moment.

The drizzling rain continued all night. At nine o’clock the streets were dark and lonely. The little cocoanut oil lanterns, which each citizen had to hang out in front of his house gave light scarcely a meter around. It seemed as though they had been lighted so one might see the darkness.

Two Civil Guards were walking from one side of the street to the other near the church.

“It is cold,” said one in Tagalog with a Visayan accent. “We aren’t catching any sacristans. There is nobody to clean out the *alferez’s* hen yard and we ought to catch some sacristan and make him do it. Since that one was killed, they have taken warning. I am getting tired of this.”

“So am I,” replied the other. “Nobody commits any robbery; no one disturbs the peace; but, thank God, they say that Elias is in town.

The *alferez* says that the one who catches him will be free from whippings for three months."

"Ah! Do you know his identification marks?" asked the Visayan.

"I certainly do! Stature, tall, according to the *alferez's* description; ordinary, according to the description of Father Dámaso; color, brunette; eyes, black; nose, regular; mouth, regular; beard, none; hair, black."

"Ah! And particular marks?"[215]
"*Camisa*, black; pantaloons, black; a wood-cutter——"

"Ah! He will not escape. I think I see him already."

"I don't confuse him with anybody else, although you might think so."

Both soldiers continued their beats.

By the light of the lantern two forms could again be seen, one following the other cautiously. A forcible "*Quien vive?*" stops them both. The first one replied "*España*," in a trembling voice.

The two soldiers drag him along and bring him up to the light, to recognize him. It was Lucas, but the soldiers were in doubt and questioned each other with a glance.

"The *alferez* said nothing about his having a scar," said the Visayan in a low voice. "Where are you going?"

"To order a mass for to-morrow."

"Have you not seen Elias?"

"I do not know him, señor," replied Lucas.

"You dunce! I am not asking if you know him. Nor do we know him. I am asking you if you have seen him."

"No, señor."

"Listen closely. I will give you his description. Stature, at times tall, at times regular; skin and eyes, black; all the others are regular," said the Visayan. "Do you know him now?"

“No, señor,” replied Lucas, frightened.

“Then, *sulung*! (Go along). You brute! You ass!” And they gave him a shove.

“Do you know why Elias is tall, according to the *alferez*, and why he is short, according to the curate?” asked the Tagalog of the other.

“No.”

“Because the *alferez* was stuck in a mud hole when he observed him, and the curate was on foot when he saw him.”

“That’s right!” exclaimed the Visayan. “You are bright. Why are you a *Guardia Civil*?”

“I haven’t been always. I was a smuggler at one time,” replied the Tagalog boastingly.

But another form attracted their attention. They called out “*Quien Vive?*” and brought him up to the light. This time it was Elias himself.[216]
“Where are you going?”

“I am pursuing, señor, a man who has whipped and threatened my brother. He has a scar on his face and his name is Elias——”

“Ha?” exclaimed the two, and looked at each other frightened.

And at once they started on a run toward the church, where a few minutes before Lucas had disappeared.[217]
[Contents]

Chapter XXXIV.
The Discovery.

The bell announces the hour of evening prayer. On hearing the religious sound, all stop, leave their work and uncover their heads; the laborer, coming from the fields on the *carabao's* back, suspends the song to which the animal keeps step, and prays; the women in the middle of the street make the sign of the cross, and move their lips with affectation so that no one may doubt their devotion: the man stops fondling his game-cock and recites the Angelus so that he may have good luck; in the houses, they pray in a loud voice ... every sound which is not a part of the *Ave Maria* is dissipated, silenced.

However, the curate, without his hat, hastily crosses the street, scandalizing many old women. And still more scandalous, he directs his steps towards the *alferez's* house. The devout women think that it is time for them to stop the movement of their lips and to kiss the curate's hand, but Father Salví takes no notice of them. To-day he finds no pleasure in placing his bony hand under a Christian's nose. Some important business must be occupying him that he should so forget his own interests and those of the Church!

He goes up the stairs and knocks impatiently at the *alferez's* door. The latter appears, his eyebrows knit and followed by his better half, who smiles malignantly.

"Ah, Father Curate! I was just going to see you. Your he-goat...."

"I have a most important matter...."

"I can't allow your goat to go on breaking down my fence.... I'll shoot him if he gets in there again."

"That is if you are alive to-morrow," said the curate, breathless, and directing himself toward the *sala*.

"What! do you think that that seven-months-old puppy will kill me? I'll kick him to pieces."[218]
Father Salví stepped back and looked instinctively at the feet of the *alferez*.

"Whom are you talking about?" asked he, trembling.

“Of whom could I be talking but that big blockhead who proposes to challenge me to a duel with revolvers at one hundred paces?”

“Ah!” sighed the curate, and added: “I have come to speak about a most urgent matter which seriously concerns the life of all of us.”

“Seriously!” repeated the *alferez*, turning pale in turn. “Does this young fellow shoot well...?”

“I am not speaking about him.”

“Then?”

The friar pointed to the door which the a*lferez* shut in his customary manner, by a kick. The a*lferez* usually found his hands superfluous. An imprecation and a groan from without were heard.

“You brute. You have cut open my head!” cried his wife.

“Now unbosom yourself,” said he to the curate in a quiet manner. The latter looked at him for some time. Afterward he asked, in that nasal and monotonous priest’s voice:

“Did you see how I came running?”

“Umph! I thought something was the matter with you.”

“When I leave my duties in this manner there are grave motives.”

“And what is it?” asked the other, stamping his foot on the floor.

“Calm yourself!”

“Then, why did you come in such a hurry?”

The curate approached him and asked in a mysterious way:

“Don’t—you—know—anything—new?”

The *alferez* shrugged his shoulders.

“You confess that you know absolutely nothing?”

“What! do you mean to tell me about Elias, whom your sacristan mayor hid last night?” he asked.

“No, no! I don’t speak of such matters now,” replied the curate, in a bad humor. “I am talking about a great danger.”[219]
“Then d——n it! Let it out.”

“Now then,” said the friar slowly and with a certain disdain, “you will see again how important we priests are. The lowest layman is worth a regiment, so that a curate....”

And then lowering his voice in a very mysterious manner:

“I have discovered a great conspiracy.”

The *alferez* started and looked at the friar astonished.

“A terrible and well-laid conspiracy, which is to break out this very night.”

“This very night!” exclaimed the *alferez*, moving at first toward Father Salví, and then running after his revolver and saber, which were hanging on the wall: “Whom shall I arrest? Whom shall I arrest?” he cried.

“Be calm. It is not yet time, thanks to my great haste. At eight o’clock.”

“I’ll shoot them all!”

“Listen! This afternoon a woman, whose name I must not mention (it is a secret of the confessional) came to me and disclosed it all. At eight o’clock they will take the *cuartel* by surprise, sack the convent, seize the Government’s steamboat and assassinate all the Spaniards.”

The *alferez* was stupified.

“The woman has not told more than that,” added the curate.

“Has not told you more? Then I’ll arrest her!”

“No; I cannot consent to it. The tribunal of penitence is the throne of God of forgiveness.”

“Neither God nor forgiveness count in this matter. I’ll arrest her.”

“You are losing your head. What you ought to do is to prepare yourself. Arm your soldiers quietly and put them in ambush. Send me four Guards for the convent and notify the people on the Government steamboat.”

“The boat is not here. I’ll send to other sections for aid.”

“They would notice that and would not go on with their plans. No, don’t do that. What is important is that we catch them alive and make them talk; I say, you will make them disclose the conspiracy. I, in the capacity [220]of a priest, ought not to mix myself in these matters. Now’s your chance! Here you can win crosses and stars. I ask only that you make it evident that I am the one who warned you.”
“It will be made evident, Father, it will be made evident! And perhaps a mitre will fall to you!” replied the radiant *alferez*.

“Be sure and send me four un-uniformed Civil Guards, eh? Be discreet! To-night at eight o’clock, it will rain stars and crosses.”

While this was going on, a man came running down the road which led to Ibarra’s house, and quickly went up the stairs.

“Is the Señor at home?” asked Elias of the servant.

“He is in his laboratory at work.”

Ibarra, in order to pass the time while he impatiently waited for the hour when he could make explanations to Maria Clara, had gone to work in his cabinet.

“Ah, is it you, Elias?” he exclaimed. “I was thinking about you. Yesterday, I forgot to ask you for the name of that Spaniard in whose house your grandfather lived.”

“Don’t bother yourself, Señor, about me....”

“Look!” continued Ibarra, without noting the agitation of the young man, and putting a piece of bamboo to a flame. “I have made a great discovery. This bamboo is incombustible....”

“Don’t talk about bamboo now, Señor. Talk about collecting your papers and fleeing in a minute.”

Ibarra looked at him surprised, and, on seeing the seriousness in Elias’s countenance, he dropped the object which he had in his hands.

“Burn everything that can possibly implicate you in any way and put yourself in a more secure place within an hour.”

“And what for?” he asked at last.

“Put all that you have of value in a secure place....”

“And what for?”

“Burn all papers written by you or to you. The most innocent can be interpreted in a bad sense.”

“But what for?”

“What for? Because I have just discovered a conspiracy [221]which will be attributed to you in order to ruin you.”
“A conspiracy? And who has planned it?”

“I have been unable to learn the author of it. Only a moment ago I was talking with one of the unfortunate men who have been paid for it. I could not dissuade him.”

“And didn’t that fellow say who paid him?”

“Yes. Asking me to keep the secret, he told me that it was you.”

“My God!” exclaimed Ibarra. He stood stupefied.

“Señor, don’t hesitate, don’t doubt, don’t lose time, for undoubtedly the conspiracy will break out this very night.”

Ibarra, with staring eyes, and hands holding his head, seemed not to hear him.

“The blow cannot be thwarted,” continued Elias. “I have arrived too late. I do not know their leaders ... save yourself, Señor, save yourself for the sake of your country.”

“Where shall I flee? They are expecting me this evening,” exclaimed Ibarra, thinking of Maria Clara.

“To any other town, to Manila, to the house of some official; only flee somewhere so that they will not say that you are directing the movement.”

“And if I myself denounce the conspiracy?”

“You denounce it?” exclaimed Elias, looking at him, and stepping back. “You would pass for a traitor and a coward in the eyes of the conspirators, and for a pusillanimous person in the eyes of others. They would say that you had played a trick to win some praise, they would say....”

“But what can be done?”

“Already I have told you. Destroy all the papers you have which relate to you; flee and await developments.”

“And Maria Clara?” exclaimed the young man. “No; death first!”

Elias wrung his hands and said:

“Well, then, at least avoid the blow. Prepare yourself against their accusations.”

Ibarra looked around him in a stupefied manner.

“Then, help me! There in those bags I have my family [222]letters. Sort out those from my father, which are, perhaps, the ones that would incriminate me. Read the signatures.”

Ibarra, stunned and overwhelmed, opened and closed drawers, collected papers, hastily read letters, tore up some, kept others, took down books and thumbed through some of them. Elias did the same, if indeed with less confusion, with equal zeal. But he stopped, with eyes wide open, turned over a paper which he had in his hand and asked in a trembling voice:

“Did your family know Don Pedro Eibarramendia?”

“Certainly!” replied Ibarra, opening a drawer and taking out a pile of papers. “He was my great-grandfather.”

“Your great grandfather? Don Pedro Eibarramendia?” he again asked, with livid features and a changed appearance.

“Yes,” replied Ibarra, distracted. “We cut short the name, for it was too long.”

“He was a Basque?” said Elias approaching him.

“Yes; but what’s the matter?” he asked, surprised.

Elias closed his fist, shook it in Ibarra’s face and looked at him. Crisostomo stepped back as soon as he read the expression on that face.

“Do you know who Don Pedro Eibarramendia was?” he asked between his teeth. “Don Pedro Eibarramendia was that wretch who accused my grandfather and caused all our misery.... I was looking for one of his name. God has given you into my hands.... Account to me for our misfortunes.”

Ibarra looked at him terrified. Elias shook him by the arm and, in a bitter voice, filled with hate, said:

“Look at me well; see if I have suffered, and you, you live, you love, you have fortune, home, consideration. You live ... you live!”

And, beside himself, he ran toward a small collection of arms, but he had scarcely grasped two swords when he let them fall, and, like a madman, looked at Ibarra, who remained immovable.

“What am I to do?” he said and fled from the house.[223]
[Contents]

Chapter XXXV.
The Catastrophe.

There in the dining-room Captain Tiago, Linares, and Aunt Isabel were eating supper. In the *sala* the rattling of plate and tableware was heard. Maria Clara had said that she did not care to eat and had seated herself at the piano. By her side was jolly Sinang, who murmured little secrets in Maria's ear, while Father Salví uneasily paced the *sala*.

It was not because the convalescent had no appetite that she was not eating. It was because she was awaiting the arrival of a certain person and had taken advantage of the moment in which her Argus could not be present, the hour when Linares ate.

"You will see how that ghost will stay till eight o'clock," murmured Sinang, pointing to the curate. "At eight o'clock *he* ought to come. This priest is as much in love as Linares."

Maria Clara looked at her friend, frightened. The latter, without noticing her expression, continued her terrible gossip:

"Ah! Now I know why he doesn't go, in spite of all my hints. He doesn't want to burn the lamps in the convent. Don't you see? Ever since you fell ill, he has had the two lights which he used to burn, put out. But look at his eyes and his face!"

Just at that moment the clock in the house struck eight. The curate trembled and went and sat down in a corner of the room.

"He is coming," said Sinang, pinching Maria Clara. "Do you hear?"

The bell in the church tolled eight and all arose to pray. Father Salví, with a weak and trembling voice, led, but, as each one had his own thoughts, nobody paid any attention to him.[224]

The prayer had scarcely ended, when Ibarra presented himself. The young man was wearing mourning, not only in his dress, but in his face. In fact, it was so evident that Maria Clara, on seeing him, arose and took a step toward him as if to ask what ailed him, but at the same instant a discharge of musketry was heard. Ibarra stopped, his eyes rolled and he was unable to

speak. The curate hid himself behind a pillar. More shooting and more noise was heard in the direction of the convent, followed by cries and the sound of people running. Captain Tiago, Aunt Isabel and Linares entered the room, hurriedly crying "*tulisan! tulisan!*" Andeng followed them, brandishing a spit and ran toward her foster sister.

Aunt Isabel fell on her knees and prayed the *Kyrie eleison*. Captain Tiago, pale and trembling, carried a chicken's liver on his fork, and, in tears, offered it to the Virgin of Antipolo. Linares had his mouth full and was armed with a spoon. Sinang and Maria Clara embraced each other. The only person who did not move was Ibarra. He stood as if petrified, his face indescribably pale.

The cries and blows continued, the windows were shut with a bang, a whistle was heard, and occasionally a shot.

"*Christe eleison!* Santiago, fasten the windows," groaned Aunt Isabel.

"Fifty great bombs and a thanksgiving mass," replied Captain Tiago. "*Ora pro nobis!*"

After a time, things quieted down and there was a terrible silence. The voice of the *alferez* was distinguished, as he came running in, and crying: "Father curate! Father Salví! Come!"

"*Misere!* The *alferez* is asking for confession!" cried Aunt Isabel.

"Is he wounded?" asked Linares at last. "Ah!"

"Come, Father Salví! There is nothing to fear now," continued the *alferez*, shouting.

Father Salví, pale, and decided at last, came out of his hiding-place and went downstairs.

"The *tulisanes* have killed the *alferez*!" said Aunt Isabel.

"Maria Clara, Sinang, go to your room! Fasten the door! *Kyrie eleison!*"

Ibarra also went toward the stairs, in spite of Aunt [225]Isabel, who was saying: "Don't go out! You haven't confessed yet. Don't go out!"
The good old woman had been a great friend of Ibarra's mother.

But Ibarra left the house. It seemed to him that all about him was revolving through the air, that even the ground was gone from under his feet. His ears buzzed. His legs moved heavily and irregularly. Waves of blood, light and darkness, succeeded one another on the retina of his eye.

Despite the fact that the moon was shining brightly in the heavens, the young man stumbled on every stone in the solitary and deserted street.

Near the *cuartel* he saw some soldiers with their bayonets fixed, talking excitedly. He passed by unseen.

In the tribunal, blows, cries, wails, and curses were heard. The *alferez's* voice drowned all the others.

"Put him in the stocks! Put handcuffs on that fellow! Two shots for whoever moves! Sergeant, you will mount your guard! Let no one pass, not even God! Corporal, let no one sleep!"

Ibarra hastened his steps toward his house. His servants were uneasily awaiting him.

"Saddle the best horse and go to bed!" said he to them.

He entered his laboratory and hurriedly began to get his travelling bag ready. He opened an iron box, took out all the money which he found there and put it in a bag. He gathered his jewels together, took down a picture of Maria Clara which was hanging upon the wall, and, arming himself with a dirk and two revolvers, he turned to the cupboard where he had some tools.

At that instant, three blows, loud and strong, sounded on the door.

"Who's there?" asked Ibarra, in a doleful voice.

"Open in the name of the King! Open the door at once, or we will knock it down!" replied an imperious Spanish voice.

Ibarra looked toward the window. His eyes flashed and he cocked his revolver. But changing his mind, he left the arms and went to open the door at the same moment that the servants came up.[226]
Three Guards seized him instantly.

"You are made a prisoner in the name of the King!" said the sergeant.

“What for?”

“They will tell you later. We are prohibited from saying a word.”

The young man reflected a moment and not wishing, perhaps, the soldiers to discover his preparations for flight, he took his hat and said:

“I am at your disposal. I suppose it will be only for a short time.”

“If you promise not to escape, we will not handcuff you. The *alferez* grants this favor, but if you flee——”

Ibarra followed, leaving the servants in consternation.

In the meantime, what had become of Elias?

On leaving Crisostomo’s house, like a madman, he ran about without knowing where. He crossed fields, and in violent agitation arrived at a forest. He was fleeing from people, and from light. The moon troubled him and he entered the mysterious shade of the forest. Sometimes stopping, sometimes following unbroken paths, leaning upon century-old trunks, entangled in the briars, he looked toward the town, which lay at his feet bathed in the light of the moon, stretching itself out on the plain, lying on the shore of the lake. Birds, disturbed in their sleep, flew away. Owls screeched and flew from one limb to another. But Elias neither heard nor saw them. He thought he was being followed by the infuriated shades of his ancestors. He saw the horrible basket hanging from every branch with the blood-covered head of Bálat, just as his father had described it to him. He thought he saw the dead body of his grandmother lying at the foot of every tree. He seemed to see the skeleton of his dishonored grandfather in the darkness, and the skeleton, the old woman, and the head all cried out to him, “Coward! Coward!”

He left the mountain and fled down toward the sea. He ran along the beach in agitation. But there in the distance, amid the waves, where the light of the moon seemed to raise a fog, he thought he saw a shade raise itself, the shade of his sister, with her breast covered with blood, her hair hanging loose in the air.[227]
Elias fell upon his knees on the sand.

“And you, too!” he cried stretching out his arms.

Then, with his eyes fixed on the fog, he arose slowly and, advancing toward it, went into the water as if to follow somebody. He waded on over the gentle slope of the beach which forms the bar. He was already far from the shore and the water was up to his belt. He went on and on, as if fascinated by a seducing spirit. The water was now up to his breast. Suddenly, the discharge of musketry awoke him from his dream, the vision disappeared, and the young man returned to reality. He stopped, reflected, and noticed that he was in the water. The lake was smooth and he could still see the lights in the fishermen's huts.

He returned to the shore and made his way toward the town. What for? He himself did not know.

The town seemed uninhabited. The houses were all closed. Even the animals, the dogs which are accustomed to bark at night, had hid themselves through fear. The silvery light of the moon increased the sadness and solitude.

Afraid of meeting the Civil Guards, he went through the orchards and gardens. In one of the gardens he thought he saw two human forms, but he continued his way. Jumping over fences and walls, he arrived after great labor at the other side of the town, and directed his steps toward Ibarra's house. The servants were in the door, lamenting and commenting on the arrest of their master.

Aware of what had passed, Elias went away, but returned to the house, leaped over the wall, crawled through a window and went into the cabinet or laboratory, where the candle which Ibarra had left was still burning.

Elias saw the papers and the books. He found the arms and the little sacks which contained the money and the jewelry. All that had passed ran through his imagination again, and, seeing all the papers which might incriminate Ibarra, he thought of collecting them, throwing them through the window and burying them.

He glanced toward the garden and, by the light of the [228]moon, he saw two Civil Guards coming with an adjutant. Their bayonets and helmets were glistening in the light.
Then he decided. He piled up the clothes and papers in the middle of the cabinet, emptied the oil in a lamp upon the pile and set fire to it. He quickly

buckled the arms around him. He saw the picture of Maria Clara, hesitated —put it in one of the little sacks, and jumped out of the window with them all.

It was already time, for the two Civil Guards were forcing their entrance.

“Let us go up to get your master’s papers,” said the adjutant.

“Have you permission? If not, you shall not go up!” said an old servant.

But the soldiers pushed the servants aside with the butts of their guns and went upstairs. A thick smoke was already filling the whole house, and gigantic tongues of flame were coming out from the *sala*, licking the doors and windows.

“Fire! Fire! Fire!” they all cried.

Each hurried to save what he could, but the fire had filled the small laboratory, breaking out furiously among the inflammable materials. The Civil Guards had to turn back. The fire, roaring and sweeping all before it, closed the passage to them. In vain they brought water from the well. All were shouting, and crying for help, but they were isolated. The fire reached the other rooms and in thick columns of smoke ascended to the heavens. Some peasants came from a distance, but they arrived only in time to see the frightful spectacle, the end of that old building, so long respected by the elements.[229]

[Contents]

Chapter XXXVI.
What People Say and Think.

Day dawned at last for the terrorized people. The streets in which the *cuartel* and the tribunal were situated were still deserted and solitary. The houses showed no signs of life. However, a shutter was opened with a creaking noise and an infant head stuck out and looked in all directions.... Slap!... A sound announces hard contact between a strip of leather and a human body. The child made a grimace, closed its eyes and disappeared. The shutter was closed again.

The example had been set. Without any doubt the opening and closing of the shutter has been heard, for another window was opened very slowly and cautiously and a wrinkled and toothless old woman thrust out her head. She was called Sister Ruté. She looked about, knit her brows, spit noisily and then crossed herself. In the house opposite, a little window was timidly opened and her friend, Sister Rufa appeared. They looked at each other for a moment, smiled, made some signals, and again crossed themselves.

"*Jesús!* It was like a thanksgiving mass," said Sister Rufa.

"Since the time that Bálat sacked the town I have never seen a night like it," replied Sister Puté.

"What a lot of shots! They say that it was old Pablo's gang."

"*Tulisanes?* It couldn't be. They say that it was the *cuaderilleros* against the Civil Guards. For this reason, they have arrested Don Filipo."

"*Sanctus Deus!* They say that there are no less than fourteen killed."

Other windows were opened and different faces appeared, exchanging salutations and commenting on the affair.

In the light of the day—which promised to be a splendid [230]one—could be seen in the distance, like ash-colored shadows, soldiers hurrying about in confusion.
"There goes another corpse!" said some one from one of the windows.

"One? I see two."

“And so do I. But do you know what it was?” asked a man with a crafty face.

“Certainly. The *cuaderilleros*.”

“No, Señor. An uprising at the *cuartel*.”

“What uprising? The curate against the *alferez*?”

“No, nothing of the sort,” said he who had asked the question. “The Chinese have risen in revolt.”

And he closed his window again.

“The Chinese!” repeated all, with the greatest astonishment.

In a quarter of an hour other versions of the affair were in circulation. Ibarra, with his servants, it was said, had tried to steal Maria Clara, and Captain Tiago, aided by the *Guardia Civil* had defended her.

By this time the number of the dead was no longer fourteen, but thirty. Captain Tiago, it was said, was wounded and was going right off to Manila with his family.

The arrival of two *cuaderilleros*, carrying a human form in a wheelbarrow, and followed by a Civil Guard, produced a great sensation. It was supposed that they came from the convent. From the form of the feet which were hanging down, they tried to guess who it could be. By half-past seven, when other Civil Guards arrived from neighboring towns, the current version of the affair was already clear and detailed.

“I have just come from the tribunal, where I have seen Don Filipo and Don Crisostomo prisoners,” said a man to Sister Puté. “I talked with one of the *cuaderilleros* on guard. Well, Bruno, the son of the man who was whipped to death, made a declaration last night. As you know, Captain Tiago is going to marry his daughter to a Spaniard. Don Crisostomo, offended, wanted to take revenge and tried to kill all the Spaniards, even the curate. Last night they attacked the convent and the *cuartel*. Happily, by mercy of God, the curate was in Captain Tiago’s house. They say that many escaped. The Civil [231]Guards burned Don Crisostomo’s house, and if they had not taken him prisoner, they would have burned him, too.”

“They burned the house?”

“All the servants were arrested. Why, you can still see the smoke from here!” said the narrator, approaching the window. “Those who come from there relate very sad things.”

All looked toward the place indicated. A light column of smoke was still ascending to the heavens. All made comments more or less pious, more or less accusatory.

“Poor young man!” exclaimed an old man, the husband of Puté.

“Yes!” replied his wife. “But he did not order a mass for the soul of his father, who undoubtedly needs it more than others.”

“But wife, you don’t have any pity....”

“Sympathy for the excommunicated? It is a sin to have pity for the enemies of God, say the curates. Don’t you remember? He ran over the sacred burial ground as if he were in a cattle pen.”

“But a cattle pen and a cemetery are much alike,” responded the old man, “except that but one class of animals enter the cemetery.”

“What!” cried Sister Puté. “Are you still going to defend him whom God so clearly punishes? You will see that they will arrest you, too. You may support a falling house, if you want to!”

The husband became silent in view of this argument.

“Yes,” continued the old woman, “after striking Father Dámaso, there was nothing left for him to do but to kill Father Salví.”

“But you can’t deny that he was a good boy when he was a child.”

“Yes, he was a good child,” replied the old woman, “but he went to Spain. All those who go to Spain return heretics, so the curates say.”

“Oh!” exclaimed the husband, seeing his revenge. “And the curate, and all the curates, and the Archbishops, and the Pope, and the Virgin—are they not Spaniards? Bah! Are they heretics, too? Bah!”

Happily for Sister Puté, the arrival of a servant, who rushed in confused and pale, cut off the discussion.[232]
“A man hanged in a neighboring orchard!” she exclaimed breathless.

“A man hanged!” exclaimed all, full of amazement.

The women crossed themselves. No one could stir.

“Yes, Señor,” continued the servant, trembling. “I was going to gather some peas in.... I looked into the orchard next door ... to see if there ... I saw a man swinging.... I thought it was Teo ... I went nearer to gather peas, and I saw that it was not he but it was another, and was dead ... I ran, ran and....”

“Let us go and see it,” said the old man, rising. “Take us there.”

“Don’t go!” cried Sister Puté, seizing him by the shirt.

“You’ll get into trouble! He has hanged himself? Then all the worse for him!”

“Let me see it, wife! Go to the tribunal, Juan, and report it. Perhaps he is not dead yet.”

And he went ino[typo, should be into?] the orchard, followed by the servant, who kept hid behind him. The women and Sister Puté herself came along behind, full of terror and curiosity.

“There it is, Señor,” said the servant stopping him and pointing with her finger.

The group stopped at a respectful distance, allowing the old man to advance alone.

The body of a man, hanging from the limb of a *santol* tree, was swinging slowly in the breeze. The old man contemplated it for some time. He looked at the rigid feet, the arms, the stained clothing and the drooping head.

“We ought not to touch the corpse until some official has arrived,” said he, in a loud voice. “He is already stiff. He has been dead for some time.”

The women approached hesitatingly.

“It is the neighbor who lived in that little house; the one who arrived only two weeks ago. Look at the scar on his face.”

“Ave Maria!” exclaimed some of the women.

“Shall we pray for his soul?” asked a young girl as soon as she had finished looking at the dead body from all directions.

“You fool! You heretic!” Sister Puté scolded her. “Don’t you know what Father Dámaso said? To pray for [233]a damned person is to tempt God. He who commits suicide is irrevocably condemned. For this reason, he cannot be buried in a sacred place. I had begun to think that this man was going to have a bad ending. I never could guess what he lived on.”
“I saw him twice speaking with the sacristan mayor,” observed a girl.

“It couldn’t have been to confess himself or to order a mass!”

The neighbors gathered together and a large circle surrounded the corpse which was still swinging. In half an hour some officers and two *cuaderilleros* arrived. They took the body down and put it in a wheelbarrow.

“Some people are in a hurry to die,” said one of the officers, laughing, while he took out the pen from behind his ear.

He asked some trifling questions; took the declaration of the servant, whom he tried to implicate, now looking at her with evil in his eyes, now threatening her and now attributing to her words which she did not say—so much so that the servant, believing that she was going to be taken to jail, began to weep and finished by declaring that she was looking for peas, but that ... and she called Teo to witness.

In the meantime, a peasant with a wide hat and a large plaster on his neck, was examining the body, and the rope by which it was hanging.

The face was no more livid than the rest of the body. Above the rope could be seen two scars and two small bruises. Where the rope had rubbed, there was no blood and the skin was white. The curious peasant examined closely the *camisa* and the pantaloons. He noted that they were full of dust and recently torn in some places. But what most attracted his attention were the “stick-tights”[1] on his clothing, even up to his neck.

“What do you see?” asked the officer.

“I was trying to identify him, señor,” stammered the peasant, lowering his hat further from his uncovered head.[234]
“But haven’t you heard that it was one Lucas? Were you sleeping?”

All began to laugh. The peasant, embarrassed, muttered a few words, and went away with head down, walking slowly.

“Here! Where are you going?” cried the old man. “You can’t get out that way. That’s the way to the dead man’s house.”

“That fellow is still asleep,” said the officer with a jeer. “We’ll have to throw some water on him!”

Those standing around laughed again.

The peasant left the place where he had played so poor a part and directed his steps toward the church. In the sacristy, he asked for the sacristan mayor.

“He is still sleeping!” they replied gruffly. “Don’t you know that they sacked the convent last night?”

“I will wait till he awakes.”

The sacristans looked at him with that rudeness characteristic of people who are in the habit of being ill-treated.

In a dark corner, the one-eyed sacristan mayor was sleeping in a large chair. His spectacles were across his forehead among his long locks of hair. His squalid, bony breast was bare, and rose and fell with regularity.

The peasant sat down near by, disposed to wait patiently, but a coin fell on the floor and he began looking for it with the aid of a candle, under the sacristan mayor’s big chair. The peasant also noted “stick-tights” on the sleeping man’s pantaloons and on the arms of his *camisa*. The sacristan awoke at last, rubbed his good eye, and, in a very bad humor, reproached the man.

“I would like to order a mass said, señor,” replied he in a tone of excuse.

“They have already finished all the masses,” said the one-eyed man, softening his accent a little. “If you want it for to-morrow.... Is it for souls in Purgatory?”

“No, señor;” replied the peasant, giving him a *peso*.

And looking fixedly in his one eye, he added:

“It is for a person who is going to die soon.” And he left the sacristy. “I could have seized him last night,” he added, sighingly as he removed the plaster from his neck. And he straightened up and regained the stature and appearance of Elias.[235]

1A plant (*Desmodium caresceus*), the dry seeds of which cling to the clothing.

[Contents]

Chapter XXXVII.
Vae Victis!

Civil Guards were passing with a sinister air to and fro in front of the door of the tribunal, threatening with the butts of their guns the daring boys who stood on tip-toe or raised each other up in order to look through the grates in the windows.

The *sala* did not present that same joyful aspect as it did when the program for the festival was being discussed. It was gloomy and the silence was almost death-like. The Civil Guards and the *cuaderilleros* who were occupying the room scarcely spoke and the few words that they did pronounce were in a low tone. Around the table sat the *directorcillo*, two writers and some soldiers scribbling papers. The *alferez* walked from one side to the other, looking from time to time ferociously toward the door. Themistocles after the battle of Salamis could not have shown more pride at the Olympic games. Doña Consolacion yawned in one corner of the room, and disclosed her black palate and her crooked teeth. Her cold and evil look was fixed on the door of the jail, covered with indecent pictures. Her husband, made amiable by the victory, had yielded to her request to be allowed to witness the interrogation and, perhaps, the tortures which were to follow. The hyena smelled the dead body, she licked her chops and was wearied at the delay in the punishment.

The *gobernadorcillo's* chair, that large chair under the portrait of His Majesty, was empty and seemed destined for some other person.

At nearly nine o'clock, the curate, pale and with eyebrows knit, arrived.

"Well, you haven't made any one wait!" said the *alferez* sarcastically to the friar.[236]
"I would have preferred not to be present," replied Father Salví, in a low voice, without taking notice of the bitter tone.... "I am very nervous."

"As no one came, I decided that, in order not to leave the chair empty, your presence.... You already know that the prisoners are to leave town this afternoon."

"Young Ibarra and the *teniente mayor?*"

The *alferez* pointed toward the jail.

“Eight are in there,” said he. “Bruno died last night at midnight, but his declaration has been obtained.”

The curate saluted Doña Consolacion, who responded with a yawn and an “aah!” The friar took the big chair under the picture of His Majesty.

“We can begin,” said he.

“Bring out the two who are in the stocks!” ordered the *alferez* in his most terrifying voice. And turning to the curate, he added, changing his tone:

“They are fastened in the stocks with two holes vacant!”

For those who are interested in instruments of torture, we will say that the stocks is one of the most innocent. The holes in which are fastened the legs of the prisoner are a little more or less than a palm apart. Leaving two holes vacant, and putting the prisoner’s legs in the holes on either side, would make the position strained, so that the ankles would suffer peculiarly and the lower extremities be stretched apart more than a yard. It does not kill instantly, as may well be imagined.

The turnkey, followed by four soldiers, drew back the bolt and opened the door. A nauseating odor, and the thick, damp air escaped from the dense darkness of the prison and, at the same time, groans and sighs were heard. A soldier lighted a match, but the flame was extinguished in that foul, vitiated atmosphere, and they had to wait till the air was renewed.

In the vague light of a candle, several human forms could be discerned. They were men, some of whom locked their arms around their knees and hid their heads between them, others were lying down, with their mouths to the ground, some standing, and some leaning against the wall. A blow and a creaking sound was heard, accompanied by oaths; the stocks were being opened.[237]

Doña Consolacion’s body was bent forward, the muscles of her neck were rigid, her eyes riveted to the half open door.

Between the soldiers came out Tarsilo, the brother of Bruno. He wore handcuffs. His torn clothes disclosed well-developed muscles. His eyes were fixed insolently on the *alferez’s* wife.

“This is the one who defended himself most bravely, and who ordered his companions to flee,” said the *alferez* to Father Salví.

Behind came another miserable sight, a man crying and weeping like a child. He was limping and his pantaloons were stained with blood.

“Mercy, señor, have mercy! I will not enter the *cuartel* yard again,” he cried.

“He is a crafty fellow,” said the *alferez*, speaking to the curate. “He wanted to flee, but had received a flesh wound.”

“What is your name?” asked the *alferez*, speaking to Tarsilo.

“Tarsilo Alasigan.”

“What did Don Crisostomo promise you for attacking the *cuartel*?”

“Don Crisostomo has never communicated with us.”

“Don’t deny it! You wanted to surprise us for him!”

“You are mistaken. You whipped our father to death. We avenged him and nothing more. Look for your two soldiers!”

The *alferez* looked at the sergeant, surprised.

“They are at the bottom of that precipice. We threw them there yesterday. There they will rot. Now kill me! You will know nothing more.”

Silence and general surprise.

“You are not going to tell who were your accomplices?” said the *alferez* in a threatening manner and brandishing a whip.

A scornful smile curled the lips of the culprit.

The *alferez* conferred for some minutes with the curate in a low voice. Then turning to the soldiers, he ordered:

“Take him to where the dead bodies are!”

In a corner of the yard, upon an old wagon, were five [238]bodies close together and half covered by a filthy piece of torn matting. A soldier on

guard was pacing up and down, and constantly spitting.
“Do you recognize them?” asked the *alferez*, lifting the matting.

Tarsilo did not respond. He saw the dead body of Pedro, with two others; one, his own brother, riddled with bayonet wounds, and the other, Lucas, with the rope still around his neck. His look became gloomy and a sigh seemed to escape from his breast.

“Do you know them?” they asked him.

Tarsilo remained silent.

There was a whistling sound and the whip came down across his back. He trembled, and his muscles contracted. The lashes were repeated, but Tarsilo continued impassive.

“Let them whip him till they cut him to pieces or till he makes a declaration,” cried the *alferez*, exasperated.

“Speak then!” said the *directorcillo* to him. “They will surely kill you.”

They led him back to the *sala* of the tribunal, where the other prisoner was invoking God, grating his teeth and shaking on his legs.

“Do you know this man?” asked Father Salví.

“This is the first time I have ever seen him,” replied Tarsilo, looking with a certain pity on the other.

The *alferez* gave him a cuff with his fist and kicked him.

“Tie him to the bench!”

Without taking off the bloody handcuffs, he was fastened to the wooden bench. The unhappy fellow looked about him as if in search of some one, and his eyes fell on Doña Consolacion. He smiled sardonically. Those present were surprised and followed his glance and saw the señora. She was biting her lips.

“I have never seen an uglier woman,” exclaimed Tarsilo amid the general silence. “I prefer to lie down on this bench as I am doing than to lie by her side, like the *alferez*.”

The Muse turned pale.

"You are going to whip me to death, *alferez*," he continued, [239]"but to-night I will be avenged by your woman."
"Gag him!" shouted the *alferez*, furious and trembling with rage.

It seemed as though Tarsilo had wanted the gag, for when he had it in his mouth, his eyes gleamed with a ray of satisfaction.

At a signal from the *alferez* a guard, armed with a whip, began his cruel task. The whole body of Tarsilo shrank. A groan, suppressed and prolonged, could be heard in spite of the rag which stopped up his mouth. He lowered his head. His clothes were being stained with blood.

Father Salví, pale and with a wild look, rose to his feet laboriously, made a sign with his hand and left the *sala* with vacillating steps. In the street, he saw a girl, leaning her back against the wall, rigid, immovable, listening attentively, looking into space, her marble-like hands extended along the old wall. The sun was shining full upon her. She was counting, it seemed without breathing, the sharp blows and listening to that heart-rending groan. She was Tarsilo's sister.

In the meantime, the scene was continuing in the *sala*. The unfortunate fellow, overcome with pain, had become silent and waited for his punishers to tire. At last, the soldier breathless, let fall his arm. The *alferez*, pale with wrath and astonishment, made a signal for them to unloose him.

Doña Consolacion then arose and whispered something into her husband's ear. He nodded his head, signifying that he understood.

"To the well with him!" said he.

The Filipinos know what that means. In Tagalog they call it *timbain*. We do not know who could have been the inventor of this method of punishment, but we are of the opinion that he must have lived long ago. In the middle of the tribunal yard there was a picturesque stone-wall, roughly made out of cobble stones, around a well. A rustic apparatus of bamboo in the form of a lever serves to draw out the vile, dirty and bad smelling water. Broken dishes, refuse and all sorts of filth collected there, since the well was a common receptacle for everything [240]that the people threw away or found

useless. An object which fell into the place, no matter how good it may have been, was thereafter surely lost. However, the well was never closed up. At times, prisoners were condemned to go down and make it deeper, not because it was thought that the work would be useful in any way, but because the work was so difficult. If a prisoner went down in the well once, he invariably contracted a fever, from which he died.
Tarsilo contemplated all the preparations of the soldiers with a firm look. He was very pale and his lips were trembling or murmuring a prayer. The haughtiness of his desperation seemed to have disappeared, or at least to have weakened. A number of times he bent his head, fixed his eyes on the ground, resigned to his suffering.

They took him to one side of the stone wall. Doña Consolacion followed smiling. The unfortunate wretch glanced enviously toward the pile of dead bodies, and a sigh escaped from his breast.

“Speak now!” said the *directorcillo* again. “They will certainly drown you. At least, die without having suffered so much.”

“When you come out of this, you will die,” said a *cuaderillero*.

They took the gag out of his mouth and hung him by his feet. He had to go down head first and remain under the water some time just like a bucket, except that a man is left under the water a longer time.

The *alferez* went to look for a watch that he might count the minutes.

In the meantime, Tarsilo was hanging, his long hair waving in the air and his eyes half closed.

“If you are Christians, if you have hearts,” he begged, in a low voice, “let me down rapidly and make my head strike against the wall that I may die. God would reward such a good deed.... Perhaps some day you will be in the same straits as I am now.”

The *alferez* returned and with watch in hand witnessed the descent.

“Slowly, slowly!” cried Doña Consolacion following the poor fellow with her eyes. “Be careful!”[241]
The pole was being lowered slowly. Tarsilo rubbed against the projecting stones and the dirty plants which grew in the crevices. Then, the pole

ceased to move. The *alferez* was counting the seconds.

“Up!” he ordered dryly, at the end of a half minute.

The silvery harmony of the drops of water falling back into the well, announced the return of the unfortunate man to the light. As the weight on the end of the lever was heavy, he came up quickly. The rough pieces of stone and pebbles, torn loose from the walls, fell with splashes to the bottom.

His face and hair full of filthy mud, his body wet and dripping, he appeared again in the sight of the silent crowd. The wind made him shiver with cold.

“Do you want to make a declaration?” they asked him.

“Take care of my sister!” the unhappy one murmured, looking at the *cuaderillero*, with supplication.

The bamboo pole creaked again, and again the condemned man disappeared. Doña Consolacion observed that the water remained still. The *alferez* counted a minute.

When Tarsilo came up again, his face was livid and his features contracted. He glanced at those standing around and kept open his bloodshot eyes.

“Will you make a declaration?” asked the *alferez* again, with vexation.

Tarsilo shook his head and again they let him down. His eyelids were almost closed and his eyes were gazing at the white clouds floating in the heavens. He bent his neck to keep sight of the light of day, but he was soon submerged in the water. That filthy curtain closed from him the sight of the world.

A minute passed. The Muse saw large bubbles of air come up to the surface of the water.

“He is thirsty,” said she, laughing.

The water was again smooth.

This time a minute and a half had passed when the *alferez* gave the signal.

Tarsilo's features were no longer contracted. The half opened lids showed the white of his eyes. Muddy water, clotted with blood, ran out of his mouth. The cool wind was blowing, but his body no longer shivered.[242] Those present, pale and terrified, looked at each other in silence. The *alferez* made a signal for them to take him down from where he was hanging, and stepped aside for a few moments. Doña Consolacion a number of times applied the lighted end of her cigar to the bare legs of Tarsilo, but his body did not quiver. It put out the light.

"He has asphyxiated himself," murmured a *cuaderillero*. "See how his tongue is turned, as if he wanted to swallow it."

The other prisoner, trembling and perspiring, contemplated the scene. Like a madman he looked about him.

The *alferez* ordered the *directorcillo* to question him.

"Señor, Señor," he groaned. "I will tell you all that you wish."

"Good. Let us see! What is your name?"

"Andong, Señor!"

"Bernardo ... Leonardo ... Ricardo ... Educardo. Gerardo ... or what?"

"Andong, Señor," repeated the imbecile.

"Call it Bernardo or whatever you please," said the *alferez*, decided not to bother more about it.

"What family name?"

The man looked at him frightened.

"What's your name? What do you add to the name Andong?"

"Ah, Señor! Andong Medio-tonto (half-fool), Señor."

Those standing around could not resist a laugh. The *alferez* himself stopped short.

"What is your business?"

"Cocoanut tree pruner, Señor, and servant for my mother-in-law."

“Who ordered you to attack the *cuartel*?”

“Nobody, Señor.”

“What’s that; nobody? Don’t you lie or we will put you in the well. Who ordered you to do it? Speak the truth.”

“That’s the truth, Señor.”

“Who?”

“Who?”[243]
“I ask you who ordered you to revolt.”

“What revolt, Señor?”

“That one last night, when you were in the tribunal yard.”

“Ah, Señor!” exclaimed Andong, blushing.

“Who was to blame for that?”

“My mother-in-law, Señor.”

A laugh of surprise followed this reply. The *alferez* stopped and looked sharply at the simple peasant, who believed that his words had produced a good effect. More animated, he was about to continue when the crack of a whip cut him short.

“To the jail!” ordered the *alferez*. “This afternoon, send him to the capital.”[244]
[Contents]

Chapter XXXVIII.
The Accursed.

The news that the prisoners were going to depart spread quickly through the town. At first, the news was heard with terror; afterward, came tears and lamentations.

The members of the families of the prisoners were running about madly. They would go from the convent to the *cuartel* from the*cuartel* to the tribunal, and not finding consolation anywhere, they filled the air with cries and moans. The curate had shut himself up because he was ill. The *alferez* had increased his guards, who received the supplicants with the butts of their guns. The*gobernadorcillo*, a useless being, anyway, seemed more stupid and useless than ever.

The sun was burning hot, but none of the unhappy women who were gathered in front of the *cuartel* thought of that. Doray, the gay and happy wife of Don Filipo, wandered about, with her tender little child in her arms. Both were crying.

"Get out of the sun," they said to her. "Your son will catch a fever."

"What is the use of his living if he has no father to educate him?" replied the dispirited woman.

"Your husband is innocent. Perhaps he will return."

"Yes, when we are in our graves."

Capitana Tinay wept and cried for her son, Antonio. The courageous Capitana Maria gazed toward the small grate, behind which were her twins, her only sons.

There, too, was the mother-in-law of the cocoanut tree pruner. She was not crying; she was walking to and fro, gesticulating, with shirt sleeves rolled up, and haranguing the public.

"Have you ever seen anything equal to it?" said she. "They arrest my Andong, wound him, put him in the [245]stocks, and take him to the capital, all because he happened to be in the *cuartel* yard."

But few people had any sympathy for the Mussulman mother-in-law.

“Don Crisostomo is to blame for all of this,” sighed a woman.

The school teacher also was wandering about in the crowd. Ñor Juan was no longer rubbing his hands, nor was he carrying his yard stick and plumb line. He had heard the bad news and, faithful to his custom of seeing the future as a thing that had already happened, he was dressed in mourning, mourning for the death of Ibarra.

At two o’clock in the afternoon, an uncovered cart, drawn by two oxen, stopped in front of the tribunal.

The cart was surrounded by the crowd. They wanted to destroy it.

“Don’t do that!” said Capitana Maria. “Do you want them to walk?”

This remark stopped the relatives of the prisoners. Twenty soldiers came out and surrounded the cart. Then came the prisoners.

The first was Don Filipo; he was tied. He greeted his wife with a smile. Doray broke into a bitter lamentation and two soldiers had to work hard to keep her from embracing her husband. Antonio, the son of Captain Tinay, next appeared, crying like a child—a fact which made the family cry all the more. The imbecile, Andong, broke out in a wail when he saw his mother-in-law, the cause of his misfortune. Albino, the former seminary student, came out with his hands tied, as did also the twin sons of Capitana Maria. These three youths were serious and grave. The last who came was Ibarra. The young man was pale. He looked about for the face of Maria Clara.

“That is the one who is to blame!” cried many voices. “He is to blame and he will go free.”

“My son-in-law has done nothing and he is handcuffed.”

Ibarra turned to the guards.

“Tie me, and tie me well, elbow to elbow,” said he.

“We have no orders.”[246]
“Tie me!”

The soldiers obeyed.

The *alferez* appeared on horse-back, armed to the teeth. Ten or fifteen more soldiers followed him.

Each of the prisoners had there in the crowd his family praying for him, weeping for him, and calling him by the most affectionate names. Ibarra was the only exception. Even Ñor Juan himself and the school-teacher had disappeared.

“What have you done to my husband and my son?” said Doray to Ibarra, crying. “See my poor boy! You have deprived him of a father!”

The grief of the people was changed to wrath against the young man, accused of having provoked the riot. The *alferez* gave orders to depart.

“You are a coward!” cried the mother-in-law of Andong to Ibarra. “While the others were fighting for you, you were hiding. Coward!”

“Curses upon you!” shouted an old man following him. “Cursed be the gold hoarded up by your family to disturb our peace! Curse him! Curse him!”

“May they hang you, heretic!” cried one of Albino’s relatives. And unable to restrain himself, he picked up a stone and threw it at Ibarra.

The example was quickly imitated, and a shower of dust and stones fell on the unfortunate youth.

Ibarra suffered it all, impassive, without wrath, without a complaint—the unjust vengeance of suffering hearts. This was the leave-taking, the “adios” tendered to him by his town, the center of all his affections. He bowed his head. Perhaps he was thinking of another man, whipped through the streets of Manila, of an old woman falling dead at the sight of the head of her son. Perhaps the history of Elias was passing before his eyes.

The cortége moved slowly on and away.

Of the persons who appeared in a few opened windows, those who showed the most compassion for the unfortunate young man were the indifferent and the curious. All his friends had hidden themselves; yes, even Captain Basilio, who forbade his daughter Sinang to weep.

Ibarra saw the smouldering ruins of his house, of the [247]house of his fathers where he had been born, where he had lived the sweetest days of his

infancy and childhood. Tears, for a long time suppressed, burst from his eyes. He bowed his head and wept, wept without the consolation of being able to hide his weeping, tied as he was by the elbows. Nor did that grief awaken compassion in anybody. Now he had neither fatherland, home, love, friends or future.

From a height a man contemplated the funeral-like caravan. He was old, pale, thin, wrapped in a woollen blanket and was leaning with fatigue on a cane. It was old Tasio, who as soon as he heard of what had happened wanted to leave his bed and attend, but his strength would not permit it. The old man followed with his eyes the cart until it disappeared in the distance. He stood for some time, pensive and his head bowed down; then he arose, and laboriously started on the road to his house, resting at every step.

The following day, shepherds found him dead on the very threshold of his solitary retreat.[248]

[Contents]

Chapter XXXIX.
Maria Clara is Married.

Captain Tiago was very happy. During all this terrible time nobody had busied himself with him. They had not arrested him, nor had they submitted him to excommunications, court trials, electrical machines, continual hot foot baths in subterranean places, or to any of the other punishments which are well known to certain people who call themselves civilized. He had returned to his Manila house. Those who had been the Captain's friends—for he had renounced all his Filipino friends from the moment that they were suspected by the Government—had also returned to their homes after some days of vacation spent in the Government buildings. The Governor General had himself ordered these people to leave their possessions, for he had not thought it fitting that they should remain in them during the great danger.

Captain Tiago was overflowing with gratitude, but he did not know exactly to whom he was indebted for such signal favors. Aunt Isabel attributed the miracle to the Virgin of Antipolo, to the Virgin of the Rosary, or at least to the Virgin of Carmen. The least that she would concede was that it was due to Our Lady of Corea. According to the Aunt, the miracle was certainly due to one of these Virgins. Captain Tiago did not deny that it was a miracle, but he added:

"I do not believe, Isabel, that the Virgin of Antipolo could have done it alone. My friends have aided in it; my future son-in-law, Señor Linares has, as you know, joked with Señor Antonio Canovas himself, whose portrait we saw in 'Illustracion.'"

And the good man could not suppress a smile every time that he heard any important news about the event. And there was good reason for it. It was whispered about that Ibarra was going to be hanged; that, even if many proofs [249]had been lacking, at last one had appeared which could confirm the accusation; and that skilled workmen had declared that, as a matter of fact, the work for the school-house could pass for a fort or a fortification. Even if defective in some parts, that was as much as could be expected from ignorant Indians. These rumors quieted the Captain and made him smile.

Just as the Captain and his cousin, Aunt Isabel, were of different opinions about the miracle, so, too, the other friends of the family were divided into different parties—those who followed the miracle monger, and those who followed the Government. The latter party, however, was quite insignificant. The miracle mongers were sub-divided into other factions: the Sacristan Mayor of Binondo, the woman who sold the wax candles, and the chief of one of the brotherhoods, all saw the hand of God in the miracle, moved by the Virgin of the Rosary. The Chinese candle maker, who provided the Captain whenever he went on a pilgrimage to Antipolo, was saying as he sat fanning himself and wiggling his foot:

"What for you b'long foolish? Thisee belong Mergin Antipolo. She can do muchy more: others, no can do. No b'long plopper say pidgin b'long other man."

Captain Tiago held the Chinaman in great estimation and made him pass for a prophet and doctor. Examining the hand of his deceased wife in the sixth month of her pregnancy, he had prophesied:

"If thisee one no b'long man, and no go dead side, will b'long bery good woman."

And so it was that Maria Clara came to this earth and fulfilled the Chinaman's prophecy.

Captain Tiago, being a prudent and timid person, could not decide the question of the miracle as easily as the Trojan Paris. He could not give preference to one of the Virgins for fear of offending some other of them, a thing which might bring about grave results. "Prudence," he said to himself. "Be prudent! Let us not lose all now."

He was in the midst of these doubts when the party in favor of the Government, or the Governmental party, arrived, viz., Doña Victorina, Don Tiburcio, and Linares.[250]

Doña Victorina did all the talking for the three men and for herself also. She mentioned the visits which Linares had made to the Governor General, and repeatedly brought out the benefits derived from having a relative of *categoría*.

For some days past, she had been trying to be Andalusian by suppressing the *d* in all words and in changing the *s* to *z*. No one could get the idea out of her head; she would prefer to lose her front curls first.

"Yes," she said, in speaking of Ibarra. "That fellow merits very well all that he is going to get. I told you so when I saw him for the first time. I told you he was a *filibustero*. What did the General tell you, cousin? What did he say? What news did you give him about Ibarra?"

Seeing that the cousin hesitated in his reply, she went on, directing her words to Captain Tiago.

"Believe me, if they convict him, as is to be hoped, it will be through my cousin."

"Señora, Señora!" protested Linares.

But she did not give him any time.

"Oh, what a diplomat you have turned out to be! But we all know that you are the adviser of the Governor General, that he could not live without you. Ah! What a pleasure to see you, Clarita."

Maria Clara seemed paler than ever, although she was now quite recovered from her illness. Sadly smiling, she approached and greeted Doña Victorina with a formal kiss.

After the customary words had been exchanged, Doña went on with her false Andalusian.

"We came to visit you. You have been saved by the efforts of your friends,"—looking significantly at Linares.

"God has protected my father," said the girl, in a low voice.

"Yes, Clarita, but the time for miracles has passed long ago. As we Spaniards say: 'Have no trust in the Virgin and save yourself by running.'"

"The—th—the ot—ot—other way," said the doctor, correcting her proverbial quotation.

Captain Tiago, who had not yet found opportunity to say a word, ventured to ask her, giving much attention [251]to her reply: "So you, Doña Victorina,

believe that the Virgin...?"
"That is precisely what we came for, to speak to you about *the* Virgin," replied she, indicating Maria Clara. "We have a matter to talk over."

The maiden understood that she ought to retire. She sought an excuse and went away, supporting herself on the furniture as she walked along.

What was said in the conference which followed was so low and mean that we prefer to omit it. It is sufficient for us to say that when they took their leave all were happy, and that Captain Tiago afterward said to his cousin:

"Isabel, send word to the restaurant that we are going to give a *fiesta* to-morrow. You get Maria ready to be married in a short time."

Aunt Isabel looked at him, surprised.

"You will see! When Señor Linares is our son-in-law all the palaces will be open to us. They will be envying us; they will all die with envy."

And thus it was that at eight o'clock on the following evening, Captain Tiago's house was again full of guests, only that this time the men whom he had invited were either Spaniards or Chinamen, while the fair sex was represented by Spaniards born in the Peninsula or in the Philippines.

The larger part of our acquaintances was there: Father Sibyla, Father Salví and several other Franciscans and Dominicans, the old lieutenant of the Civil Guard, Señor Guevara, more melancholy than ever; the *alferez*, who related his battle for the thousandth time, feeling himself head and shoulders above everybody and a veritable Don Juan de Austria, now a lieutenant with the rank of commander; De Espadaña, who looked at the former with respect and fear and avoided his glance; and the indignant Doña Victorina. Linares was not yet present, for, being a very important personage, it was fitting that he should arrive later than the others.

Maria Clara, the subject of all the gossip, was the center of a group of women. She had greeted and received them ceremoniously, but did not throw off her air of sadness.[252]
"Psh!" said one of the girls. "A little stuck-up!"

"A cute little thing," replied another, "but he might have selected some one of a more intelligent appearance."

“It’s the money; he’s a good-looking fellow and sells himself for a good price.”

In another part of the room they were talking like this:

“Marry, when her former betrothed is about to be hanged!”

“I call that prudence; to have one on hand as a substitute.”

Possibly the young maiden heard these remarks as she sat in a chair near by, arranging a tray of flowers, for her hand was seen to tremble, she turned pale and bit her lips a number of times.

The conversation among the men was in a loud tone. Naturally, they were conversant with the recent happenings. All were talking, even Don Tiburcio, with the exception of Father Sibyla, who maintained a disdainful silence.

“I have heard that Your Reverence leaves the town, Father Salví?” asked the newly made lieutenant, now made more amiable by the star on his sleeve.

“I have nothing more to do now in San Diego. I am permanently settled in Manila now ... and you?”

“I also leave the town,” replied the former *alferez*, straightening up. “The Government needs me to take command of a flying column to clear the provinces of *filibusteros*.”

Friar Salví looked him over from head to foot, and turned his back to him completely.

“Is it yet known for a certainty what is to become of the leader of the revolutionists?” asked a Government employee.

“Are you referring to Crisostomo Ibarra?” asked another. “What is most probable and most just is that he be hanged, as those were in ’72.”

“He will be exiled,” said the old lieutenant, dryly.

“Exiled! Nothing more than exiled! But it will be a perpetual exile!” exclaimed several at the same time.

“If that young fellow,” Lieutenant Guevara went on to [253]say in a loud voice, “had been more cautious; if he had trusted certain people less with whom he had correspondence; and if the officers had not made a subtle interpretation of what was written—if it had not been for all of this, that young man would surely have gone free.”

This statement by the old lieutenant and the tone of his voice produced a great surprise in the room. Those who heard it did not know what to say. Father Salví looked in another direction, perhaps so as not to meet the dark look which the old man directed toward him. Maria Clara dropped her flowers and sat motionless. Father Sibyla, the one who knew how to keep silent, appeared to be the only one who knew how to ask questions.

“Are you referring to the letters, Señor Guevara?”

“I am telling what the defendant’s attorney told me. He has taken up the case with zeal and interest. Aside from some ambiguous lines which this young man wrote to a young woman before departing for Europe, they have found no proof to sustain the accusation. In these few lines, the officers saw a plan and threat against the Government.”

“And what about the declaration made by the bandit before he died?”

“That statement has proved of no account, since, according to the bandit himself, the conspirators never had communicated with the young man, but only with one, Lucas, who was Ibarra’s enemy, as they have been able to prove, and who committed suicide, perhaps from remorse. It has been proved that the papers found in the possession of the dead man were forged, since the handwriting was like that of Ibarra seven years ago, but not like that of to-day—a fact which shows that it was copied from the letter used as evidence against him. Besides, his attorney says that if Ibarra had not admitted the genuineness of the letter, he would have been able to do much for him; but, at the sight of it, the young man turned pale, lost heart and acknowledged that he had written it.”

“Do you say,” asked a Franciscan, “that the letter was directed to a young woman? How did it get into the hands of the officers?”

The lieutenant did not reply. He looked for a moment [254]at Friar Salví and then walked off, twisting nervously the end of his grey beard. In the meantime, others were commenting something like this:

“There you see the hand of God!” said one. “Even the women hate him.”

“He had his house burned, thinking that he could thus save himself. But he did not reckon with his host—that is, with his *querida*,[1]with his *babai*,”[1] added another, smiling. “That is God’s work. Santiago protects Spain!”

The old army officer stopped and approached Maria Clara. She was listening to the conversation, immovable in her seat. The flowers were at her feet.

“You are a very prudent young woman,” said the old lieutenant to her in a low voice. “You have done well to hand over the letter.... In this way you will assure yourself of a peaceful future.”

With dull eyes, and biting her lips, she looked at him as he walked away. Luckily, Aunt Isabel passed her at this moment. Maria Clara summoned enough strength to catch hold of her aunt’s dress.

“Aunt,” she murmured.

“What is the matter with you?” asked the latter, frightened, as she saw the young woman’s face.

“Take me to my room!” she begged, clinging to the arm of the old woman in order to raise herself to her feet.

“Are you sick, my child? You seem to have lost all your strength. What is the matter with you?”

“A little sick to my stomach ... the crowd in the *sala* ... so much light ... I need to rest. Tell father that I am going to sleep.”

“You are cold! Do you want some tea?”

Maria Clara shook her head negatively. She closed the door of her room and locked it, and, her strength failing her, she fell to the floor, at the feet of an image, weeping and sobbing:

“Mother, mother, my mother!”

The moonlight was shining through the open window and door which led out upon the *azotea*.

The orchestra continued playing gay waltzes. The laughter and the hum of conversation could be heard in [255]her bedroom. A number of times her family, Aunt Isabel, Doña Victorina, and even Linares, knocked at her door, but Maria Clara did not move. There was a rattle in her throat.
Hours passed. The pleasures of the table ended, and dancing followed. Her little candle burned out, but the maiden lay quietly on the floor, the rays of moonlight shining upon her at the foot of an image of the Mother of Jesus.

Gradually the noises in the house died away, the lights were put out, and Aunt Isabel again knocked at the door of her room.

“Let us leave her; she is sleeping,” said her aunt. “At her age, with nothing to trouble her, she sleeps like a corpse.”

When all was again silent, Maria arose slowly and glanced around her. She saw the *azotea* and the small climbing plants bathed in the melancholy light of the moon.

“A peaceful future! Sleeping like a corpse!” she murmured in a low voice, and turned toward the *azotea*.

The city was quiet. Only the noise of an occasional carriage passing over the wooden bridge could be heard in the stillness of the night, while the tranquil waters of the river were reflecting the moonlight.

The maiden raised her eyes to the pure, sapphire-colored sky. Slowly she took off her rings, her hair-combs, her earrings, and her breast-pin, and placing them upon the balustrade of the *azotea* she looked out toward the river.

A *banca*, loaded with rice grass, stopped at the foot of the landing on the bank of the river at the rear of the house. One of the two men who were propelling the boat went up the stone steps, leaped over the wall, and a few seconds afterward, steps were heard coming up the *azotea*.

Maria Clara saw him stop on discovering her, but it was for only a moment. The man advanced slowly and at about three steps from the maiden, stopped again. Maria Clara stepped back.

“Crisostomo!” she gasped, full of terror.

“Yes, I am Crisostomo!” replied the young man, in a [256]grave voice. “An enemy, a man who has good reason to hate me, Elias, has helped me out of the prison into which my friends had thrown me.”
Silence followed these words. Maria Clara bowed her head and allowed both her hands to drop at her side.

Ibarra continued:

“Beside the dead body of my mother, I swore to make you happy, whatever might be my destiny. You can break your oath; she was not your mother. But I, who am her son, I hold her memory sacred, and, running great risk, I have come here to fulfill my oath. Fortune permits me to speak with you personally. Maria, we shall not see each other again. You are young and perhaps some day your conscience may accuse you.... I come to tell you, before leaving, that I forgive you. Now, may you be happy, and good-bye!”

Ibarra tried to leave, but the maiden stopped him.

“Crisostomo!” she said. “God has sent you to save me from desperation.... Hear me and judge me!”

Ibarra wished to withdraw gently from her.

“I have not come,” said he, “to call you to account.... I have come to give you peace.”

“I do not want the peace which you give me. I will give myself peace. You despise me, and your contempt will make my life bitter till death.”

Ibarra saw the poor girl’s desperation, and asked her what she desired.

“That you may believe that I have always loved you.”

Crisostomo smiled bitterly.

“Ah! You doubt me, you doubt the friend of your infancy, who has never hidden a single thought from you,” exclaimed she in grief. “I understand you. When you know my history, the history which they revealed to me during my illness, you will pity me and you will no longer answer my grief with that bitter smile. Why did you not let me die in the hands of my ignorant doctor? You and I would have been happier then.”

Maria Clara rested a moment and then continued:

“You have doubted me; you have wished my mother to pardon me. During one of those nights of suffering, a man revealed to me the name of my true father, and forbade [257]me to love you ... unless my true father should pardon you for the offense you committed against him.”
Ibarra recoiled and looked in terror at the maiden.

“Yes,” she continued. “This man told me that he could not permit our marriage, since his conscience would not allow it, and he would find himself compelled to publish the truth at the risk of causing a great scandal, because my father is ...”

And she whispered a name in the young man’s ear in a scarcely audible voice.

“What was I to do? Ought I to sacrifice to my love the memory of my mother, the honor of the man who innocently supposes himself my father, and the good name of my real father? Could I do that without you despising me for it?”

“But the proof? Have you proof? You need proof!” exclaimed Crisostomo, deeply agitated.

The maiden drew two letters from her bosom.

“Two of my mother’s letters: two letters written in remorse before I was born. Take them, read them and you will see how she cursed me and desired my death, which my father in vain tried to cause by drugs. These letters were forgotten in the house where he lived; a man found them and kept them. They would only give them to me in exchange for your letter ... to make certain, as they said, that I would not marry you without the consent of my father. From the time that I began to carry them in my bosom instead of your letter, my heart was chilled. I sacrificed you, I sacrificed my love.... What would not a person do for a dead mother and two living fathers? Did I suspect the use to which they were going to put your letter?”

Ibarra was prostrated. Maria Clara went on:

“What was there left for me? Could I tell you who was my father? Could I ask you to seek the pardon of him who had so much desired my death, and

who made your father suffer? There was nothing left for me but to keep the secret to myself, and to die suffering.... Now, my friend, you know the sad history of your poor Maria. Will you still have that contemptuous smile for her?"

"Maria, you are a saint."[258]
"I am happy now that you believe me."

"However," added the young man, changing his tone. "I have heard that you are about to marry."

"Yes," sobbed the maiden. "My father asked this sacrifice of me. He has fed me and loved me, and it was not his duty. I pay him this debt of gratitude which I owe him by assuring him peace through this new relative, but ..."

"But?"

"I shall not forget the oaths of fidelity which I made to you."

"What do you think of doing?" asked Ibarra, trying to read her eyes.

"The future is obscure and Destiny is hidden in darkness. I do not know what I am to do; but I know that I can love only once, and that without love I never will belong to any one. And you, what is to become of you?"

"I am nothing but a fugitive.... I am fleeing. In a very short time, they will discover my escape, Maria...."

Maria Clara clasped her arms about her lover's neck, kissed his lips repeatedly, hugged him, and then, abruptly breaking away from him, said:

"Flee! flee! *Adios!*"

Ibarra looked at her, his eyes sparkling, but she motioned and he went away, staggering like a drunken man. Again he leaped over the wall and entered the *banca*. Maria Clara, leaning on the door casing, watched him depart.

Elias took off his hat and bowed profoundly.[259]

1Both words mean mistress.

[Contents]

Chapter XL.
The Pursuit on the Lake.

“Listen, Señor, to my plan,” said Elias, as they directed the *banca* toward San Miguel. “I will for the present hide you in the house of my friend in Mandaluyong. I will bring you all your money, which I have saved and kept for you at the foot of the old *balitî* tree, in the mysterious tomb of your grandfather. You shall leave the country.”

“To go to a strange land?” interrupted Ibarra.

“To live in peace the remaining days of your life. You have friends in Spain, you are rich, you can get yourself pardoned. By all means, a foreign land is better for you than your own country.”

Crisostomo did not reply. He meditated in silence.

Just then they reached the Pasig and the *banca* was headed up the stream. Over the Bridge of Spain a horse-man was galloping at high speed, and a prolonged, sharp whistle was heard.

“Elias,” replied Ibarra, “you owe your misfortunes to my family; you have saved my life twice; I owe you not only gratitude, but also restitution of your fortune. You advise me to go to a foreign land and live; then come with me and we will live like brothers. Here, you, too, are miserable.”

Elias sadly replied:

“Impossible! It is true that I can neither love nor be happy in my country; but I can suffer and die in it, and perhaps die for it; that would be something. Let my country’s misfortune be my own misfortune. Since no noble thought unites us, and since our hearts do not beat in harmony at the mention of a single word, at least, let a common misery unite me to my fellow countrymen; [260]at least, let me weep with them over our grief; let the same misery oppress all our hearts.”
“Then why do you advise me to leave?”

“Because in other lands you can be happy, and I cannot; because you are not made to suffer, and because you would hate your country, if some day

you should see the cause of your misfortune: and to hate one's own country is the greatest misery."

"You are unjust to me," exclaimed Ibarra, with bitter reproach. "You forget that I have scarcely arrived here, and that I have already sought its welfare."

"Do not be offended, Señor. I am not reproaching you. Would to God that all might imitate you. But I do not ask for the impossible and you should not be offended if I tell you that your heart deceives you. You love your country because your father has taught you to love it; you love it because you had in it your love, your fortune, your youth; because it smiled on you, and because it has not until now done you an injustice. You love your country as we all love that which makes us happy. But, on that day when you see yourself poor, ragged, hungry, persecuted, denounced and betrayed by your very countrymen, on that day you will curse yourself, your country and all."

"Your words grieve me," said Ibarra, resentfully.

Elias bowed his head, meditated and replied:

"I wish to set you right, Señor, and to avoid a miserable future for you. You remember the time when I was talking to you in this same*banca* and under the light of the same moon. It was a month ago, a few days more or less. Then you were happy. The plea of the unfortunates did not reach you. You disdained their complaints because they were complaints from criminals. You gave ear to their enemies, and, in spite of my reasons and pleas, you put yourself on the side of their oppressors. On you depended at that time whether I should turn criminal or allow my life to be taken in fulfillment of my sacred pledge. God has not permitted it, because the old chief of the bandits has been killed. A month has passed and now you think differently."

"You are right, Elias, but man is influenced by changes [261]in circumstances. Then I was blind, and obstinate. What did I know? Now misfortune has torn the veil from my eyes. The solitude and misery of my prison life have taught me; now I see the horrible cancer which is sapping the life of society, which hangs to its flesh and which requires violent extirpation. They have opened my eyes; they have made me see the ulcer; they force me to become a criminal. I will be a *filibustero*, but a true *filibustero*. I will call upon all the unfortunates, on all who have beating

hearts within their breasts, on all who sent you to me.... No, no! I will not be criminal! It is never a crime to fight for one's country! We for three centuries have given them our hand, we have asked them for their love, we have anxiously wished to call them our brothers. How have they replied? With insults and jests, denying us even the quality of being human beings. There is no God, there is no hope, there is no humanity. There is nothing but the right of force."
Ibarra was excited. His whole body was trembling.

They passed by the Governor General's palace, and believed they saw agitation and movement among the guards.

"Have they discovered our flight?" murmured Elias. "Lie down, Señor, so that I can cover you up with the grass, for, when we cross over to the side of the river near the powder house, the sentry may be surprised at seeing two of us in this small *banca*."

As Elias had foreseen, the sentry stopped him and asked him where he came from.

"From Manila, with grass for the magistrates and curates," replied he, imitating the accent of one from Pandakan.

A sergeant came out and was informed what was going on.

"*Sulung!*" (Go on!) said he. "I warn you not to receive any one in your *banca*. A prisoner has just escaped. If you capture him and hand him over to me I will give you a good reward."

"All right, Señor. What is his description?"

"He wears a frock coat and speaks Spanish. With that much, be on the watch!"[262]
The *banca* went on. Elias turned his face and saw the shadow of the sentry, still standing on the bank of the river.

"We will lose several minutes," said he, in a low voice. "We will have to go up the Beata river in order to carry out my pretense of being from Peña Francia."

The town was sleeping in the light of the moon. Crisostomo arose to admire the sepulchral peace of Nature. The river was narrow and its banks formed a plain planted with rice.

Elias threw the load on the bank, picked up a piece of bamboo and drew out from under the grass in the *banca* some empty sacks. They went on rowing.

"You are master of your own will, Señor, and of your own future," said he to Crisostomo, who kept silent. "But if you will permit me to offer a suggestion, I say to you: Look well at what you are going to do. You are about to start a war, for you have money, talent, and you will quickly find aid, for, unfortunately, many are discontented. Furthermore, in this fight, which you are to begin, those who are going to suffer most are the defenseless, the innocent. The same sentiments which a month ago prompted me to come to you and ask for reforms, are those which now move me to ask you to reflect. The country, Señor, is not thinking of separating itself from the mother country. It asks only a little liberty, a little justice, a little love. The discontented will assist you, the criminals and the desperate, but the people will hold aloof. You are mistaken if, seeing everything dark, you believe that the country is desperate. The country suffers, yes, but it still hopes, believe me, and will only rise in revolt when it has lost patience; that is, when those who govern wish it—which is still far off. I myself would not follow you. I shall never take recourse to these extreme remedies while I see hope in men."

"Then I will go without you!" replied Crisostomo, resolutely.

"Is it your firm decision?"

"Yes, my firm and only decision: I call to witness the memory of my father! I cannot allow them to deprive [263]me of peace and happiness with impunity, I who have desired only my country's welfare, I who have respected all and have suffered on account of a hypocritical religion, on account of love for my country. How have they responded to me? By burying me in an infamous prison and by prostituting my fiancée. No, not to avenge myself would be a crime. It would be encouraging them to commit new injustices. No! it would be cowardice, it would be pusillanimity to weep and groan while there is life and vigor, when to insult and challenge are added scoffery and contemptuous ridicule! I will arouse this ignorant

people, I will make them see their misery—this people who do not think of each other as brothers, who are mere wolves devouring each other. I will tell them to rise against this oppression and appeal to the eternal right of mankind to conquer their liberty!”
“Innocent people will suffer.”

“All the better! Can you lead me to the mountain?”

“Till you are safe!” replied Elias.

They again went up the Pasig. They spoke from time to time of indifferent things.

“Santa Aña!” murmured Ibarra. “Do you recognize that house?”

They passed by the country house of the Jesuits.

“There I passed many happy and joyful years!” sighed Elias. “In my time we used to come here every month ... then I was like the others. I had fortune, family; I was dreaming and planning a future for myself. In those days I used to visit my sister in the neighboring convent. She made me a present of a piece of her own handiwork. A girl friend used to accompany her, a beautiful girl. All has passed like a dream.”

They remained silent till they arrived at Malapad-na-bató. Those who have glided over the bosom of the Pasig on one of those magical nights when the moon pours forth its melancholy poetry from the pure blue of the sky, when the darkness hides the misery of men and silence drowns the harsh accents of their voices, when Nature alone speaks—those who have seen such nights on the Pasig will understand the feelings which filled the hearts of both young men.[264]
In Malapad-na-bató the carbineer was half asleep, and, seeing that the *banca* was empty and offered no booty for him to seize, according to the traditional custom of his corps and the use made of that position, he readily let them pass on.

Nor did the Civil Guard at Pasig suspect anything, and they were not molested.

It was just beginning to dawn when they reached the lake, calm and smooth as a gigantic mirror. The moon was growing dim and the Orient was rosy

with the tints of morning. At a distance, a mass of grey could be discerned advancing toward the *banca*.

“The *falúa* (or Government steamboat) is coming,” murmured Elias. “Lie down and I will cover you with these sacks.”

The outline of the vessel became more clear and perceptible.

“She is putting in between the beach and us,” observed Elias uneasily.

And then he changed the course of the *banca* a little, rowing toward Binangonan. To his great surprise he noticed that the *falúa* was also changing its course, while a voice cried out to him.

Elias stopped and meditated. The shore of the lake was very far off, and they would soon be in the range of the rifles on the *falúa*. He thought of returning to the Pasig. His *banca* was swifter than the *falúa*. But fate was against him! Another boat was coming up the Pasig, and they could see the helmets and shining bayonets of the Civil Guards.

“We are caught!” he murmured, turning pale.

He looked at his robust arms and taking the only course which remained to him, he began to row with all his strength toward the Island of Talim. In the meantime, the sun had risen.

The *banca* glided along rapidly. Elias saw some men standing up on the *falúa*, making signals to him.

“Do you know how to manage a *banca*?” he asked Ibarra.

“Yes; why?”

“Because we are lost if I do not leap into the water [265]and make them lose the trail. They will follow me. I swim and dive well.... I will take them away from you, and then you can save yourself.”
“No; you remain and we will sell our lives dearly.”

“Useless! We have no arms, and with those rifles they will kill us like birds.”

At that moment a *chiss* was heard in the water like the fall of a hot body, and was followed immediately by a report.

“Do you see?” said Elias, putting his paddle in the *banca*. “We will see each other again at the tomb of your grandfather on*Nochebeuna* (Christmas eve.) Save yourself.”

“And you?”

“God has taken me through greater dangers.”

Elias took off his *camisa*. A ball grazed his hands and the report sounded out. Without being disturbed, he stretched out his hand to Ibarra, who was still in the bottom of the boat. Then he arose and leaped into the water, pushing away the small craft with his foot.

A number of cries were heard. Soon at some distance the head of the young man appeared above the water as if to get breath, dropping out of sight at the next instant.

“There, there he is!” cried a number of voices, and the balls from their rifles whistled again.

The *falúa* and the other *banca* took up the chase. A light track of foam marked his course, every moment leading farther and farther away from Ibarra’s *banca*, which drifted along as if abandoned. Every time that the swimmer raised his head to breathe the Civil Guards and the men on board the *falúa* discharged their guns at him.

The pursuit continued. Ibarra’s little *banca* was already far off. The swimmer was approaching the shore of the lake and was now some fifty yards distant from it. The rowers were already tired, but Elias was not, for his head often appeared above the water and each time in a different direction so as to disconcert his pursuers. No longer was there a light trail to betray the course of the diver. For the last time they saw him near the shore, [266]some ten yards off, and they opened fire.... Then minutes and minutes passed. Nothing appeared again on the tranquil surface of the lake. Half an hour afterward one of the rowers pretended to have discovered signs of blood in the water near the shore, but his companions shook their heads in a manner which might mean either yes or no.[267]

[Contents]

Chapter XLI.
Father Dámaso Explains.

In vain the costly wedding gifts were heaped upon the table. Neither the diamonds in their blue velvet caskets, nor the embroidered*piña*, nor the pieces of silk had any attractions for Maria Clara. The maiden looked at the paper which gave the account of Ibarra's death, drowned in the lake, but she neither saw nor read it.

Of a sudden, she felt two hands over her eyes. They held her fast while a joyous voice, Father Dámaso's, said to her:

"Who am I? Who am I?"

Maria Clara jumped from her seat and looked at him with terror in her eyes.

"You little goose, were you frightened, eh? You were not expecting me? Well, I have come from the provinces to attend your wedding."

And coming up to her again with a smile of satisfaction, he stretched out his hand to her. Maria Clara approached timidly and, raising it to her lips, kissed it.

"What is the matter with you, Maria?" asked the Franciscan, losing his gay smile, and becoming very uneasy. "Your hand is cold, you are pale.... Are you ill, my little girl?"

And Father Dámaso drew her up to him with a fondness of which no one would have thought him capable. He grasped both the maiden's hands and gave her a questioning look.

"Haven't you any confidence in your godfather?" he asked in a reproachful tone. "Come, sit down here and tell me your little troubles, just as you used to do when you were a child, when you wanted wax-candles to make wax figures. You surely know that I have always loved you.... I have never scolded you...."

Father Dámaso's voice ceased to be brusque; its modulations [268]were even caressing. Maria Clara began to weep.

“Are you weeping, my child? Why are you weeping? Have you quarrelled with Linares?”

Maria Clara covered her eyes with her hands.

“No! It is not he now!” cried the maiden.

Father Dámaso looked at her full of surprise.

“Do you not want to entrust your secrets to me? Have I not always managed to satisfy your smallest caprices?”

The young woman raised her eyes full of tears toward him. She looked at him for some time, and then began to weep bitterly.

“Do not cry so, my child, for your tears pain me! Tell me your troubles. You will see how your godfather loves you.”

Maria Clara approached him slowly and fell on her knees at his feet. Then raising her face, bathed in tears, she said to him in a low voice, scarcely audible:

“Do you still love me?”

“Child!”

“Then ... protect my father, and break off the marriage!”

Then she related her last interview with Ibarra, omitting the reference to her birth.

Father Dámaso could scarcely believe what he heard.

“While he lived,” continued the maiden, “I intended to fight, to wait, to trust. I wanted to live to hear him spoken of ... but now that they have killed him, now there is no reason for my living and suffering.”

She said this slowly, in a low voice, calmly and without a tear.

“But, you goose; isn’t Linares a thousand times better than....?”

“When he was living, I could have married ... I was thinking of fleeing afterward ... my father wanted nothing more than the relative. Now that he is dead, no other man will call me his wife.... While he lived, I could have

debased myself and still had the consolation of knowing that he existed and perhaps was thinking of me. Now that he is dead ... the convent or the tomb."

Her voice had a firmness in its accent which took away Father Dámaso's joy and set him to thinking.[269]
"Did you love him so much as that?" he asked, stammering.

Maria Clara did not reply. Father Dámaso bowed his head upon his breast and remained silent.

"My child!" he exclaimed, his voice breaking. "Forgive me for making you unhappy without knowing it. I was thinking of your future; I wanted you to be happy. How could I permit you to marry a native; how could I see you an unhappy wife and a miserable mother? I could not get your love out of your head, and I opposed it with all my strength. All that I have done has been for you, for you alone. If you had become his wife, you would have wept afterward on account of the condition of your husband, exposed to all kinds of vengeance, without any means of defense. As a mother, you would have wept over the fortune of your sons; if you educated them, you would prepare a sad future for them, you would have made them enemies of the Church and would have seen them hanged or exiled; if you left them ignorant, you would have seen them oppressed and degraded. I could not consent to it! This is why I sought as a husband for you one who might make you the happy mother of sons born not to obey but to command, not to suffer but to punish. I knew that your friend was good from infancy. I liked him as I had liked his father, but I hated them both when I saw that they were going to make you unhappy, because I love you, I idolize you, I love you as my daughter. I have nothing dearer than you. I have seen you grow. No hour passes but I think of you; I dream of you; you are my only joy."

And Father Dámaso began to weep like a child.

"Well, then, if you love me do not make me eternally unhappy. He no longer lives; I want to be a nun."

The old man rested his head on his hand.

“To be a nun, to be a nun!” he repeated. “You do not know, my child, the life, the misery, which is hidden behind the walls of the convent. You do not know it! I prefer a thousand times to see you unhappy in the world than to see you unhappy in the cloister. Here your complaints can be heard, there you will have only the walls. You are beautiful, very beautiful, and you were not born [270]for it, you were not born to be the bride of Christ! Believe me, my child, time will blot it all out. Later you will forget, you will love your husband ... Linares.”
“Either the convent or ... death!” repeated Maria Clara.

“The convent, the convent or death!” exclaimed Father Dámaso. “Maria, I am already old, I will not be able to watch you or your happiness much longer.... Choose another course, seek another love, another young man, whoever he may be, but not the convent.”

“The convent or death!”

“My God, my God!” cried the priest, covering his head with his hands. “Thou punisheth me. So be it! But watch over my child.”

And turning to the young woman: “You want to be a nun? You shall be one. I do not want you to die.”

Maria Clara took his two hands, clasped them in her own and kissed them as she knelt.

“Godfather, my godfather!” she repeated.

Immediately, Father Dámaso went out, sad, with drooping head and sighing.

“God, O God! Thou existeth, for Thou punisheth. But avenge Thyself on me and do not harm the innocent. Save my child!”

THE INDOLENCE OF THE FILIPINO

BY JOSE RIZAL

("LA INDOLENCIA DE LOS FILIPINOS" IN ENGLISH.)

EDITOR'S EXPLANATION

Mr. Charles Derbyshire, who put Rizal's great novel Noli me tangere and its sequel El Filibusterismo into English (as The Social Cancer and The Reign of Greed), besides many minor writings of the "Greatest Man of the Brown Race", has rendered a similar service for La Indolencia de los Filipinos in the following pages, and with that same fidelity and sympathetic comprehension of the author's meaning which has made possible an understanding of the real Rizal by English readers. Notes by Dr. James A. Robertson (Librarian of the Philippine Library and co-editor of the 55-volume series of historical reprints well called The Philippine Islands 1493-1898, so comprehensive are they) show the breadth of Rizal's historical scholarship, and that the only error mentioned is due to using a faulty reprint where the original was not available indicates the conscientiousness of the pioneer worker.

An appropriate setting has been attempted by page decorations whose scenes are taken from Philippine

textbooks of the World Book Company and whose borders were made in the Drawing Department of the Philippine School of Arts and Trades.

The frontispiece shows a hurried pencil sketch of himself which Rizal made in Berlin in the Spring of 1887 that Prof. Blumentritt, whom then he knew only through correspondence, might recognize him at the Leitmeritz railway station when he should arrive for a proposed visit. The photograph from which the engraving was reproduced came one year ago with the Christmas greetings of the Austrian professor whose recent death the Philippine Islands, who knew him as their friend and Rizal's, is mourning.

The picture perhaps deserves a couple of comments. As a child Rizal had been trained to rapid work, an expertness kept up by practice, and the copying of his own countenance from a convenient near-by mirror was but a moment's task. Yet the incident suggests that he did not keep photographs of himself about, and that he had the Cromwellian desire to see himself as he really was, for the Filipino features are more prominent than in any photograph of his extant.

The essay itself originally appeared in the Filipino forthrightly review, La Solidaridad, of Madrid, in five

installments, running from July 15 to September 15, 1890. It was a continuation of Rizal's campaign of education in which he sought by blunt truths to awaken his countrymen to their own faults at the same time that he was arousing the Spaniards to the defects in Spain's colonial system that caused and continued such shortcomings.

To-day there seems a place in Manila for just suets, missionary work as The Indolence of the Filipino aimed at. It may help on the present improving understanding between Continental Americans and their countrymen of these "Far Off Eden Isles", for the writer submits as his mature opinion, based on ten years' acquaintance among Filipinos through studies which enlisted their interest, that the political problem would have been greatly simplified had it been understood in Dewey's day that among intelligent Americans the much-talked-of lack of "capacity" referred to the mass of the people's want of political experience and not to any alleged racial inferiority. To wounded pride has the discontent been due rather than to withholding of political privileges.

Spanish Philippine history has curiously repeated itself during the fifteen years of America's administration of this archipelago.

Just as some colonial Spaniards seemed to the Filipinos less creditable representatives of the metropolis than the average of those who remained in the Peninsula, so not all who now pass for Americans in the Philippines are believed here to measure up to the highest homestandard.

Sitters in swivel-chairs underneath electric fans hold hopeless the future of the land where men do not desire to be drudges just as did their predecessors who in wide armed lazy seats, beneath punkahs, talked of Filipino indolence.

Ingratitude, to-day as then, is the regular rejoinder to the progressing people's protest against paternalism, and altruistic regard for their real welfare is still represented as the reason why special legislation should be provided when Filipinos prefer the same laws as govern the sovereign people.

Though those who claim to champion the Philippines' cause apparently are unaware of it, these Islands have a population strangely alike in its make up to the people of America; their history is full of American associations; Americans developed their leading resources, and American ideas have inspired their political aspirations. It betrays blindness somewhere

that ever since 1898 Filipinos have been trying to get loose from America in order to set up here an American form of government,

There seems now a, prospect that insular legislation may make available to the individual the guarantees of personal liberty upon which America at home prides itself, that municipal self-government and provincial autonomy may become realities in the Philippines, and possibly even that both Filipinos and Americans may realize before it is too late how our elastic territorial government could be made to exact from them much less of their independence than the sacrifice of sovereignty necessary in Neutralization or internationalization.

Unwillingness to work when there is nothing in it for them is common to Filipinos and Americans, for Thomas Jefferson admitted that extravagance and indolence were the chief faults of his countrymen. Labor-saving machinery has made the fruits of Americans' labors in their land of abundance afford a luxury in living not elsewhere existing. But the Filipino, in his rich and not over-populated home, shutting out, as we do, oriental cheap labor, may employ American machinery and attain the same standard. The possibilities for the prosperity of the

population put the Philippines in the New World, just as their discovery and their history group them with the Western Hemisphere.

Austin Craig,

University of the Philippines,

Manila, December 20th, 1913.

I

DOCTOR Sancianco, in his Progreso de Filipinas, (1), has taken up this question, agitated, as he calls it, and, relying upon facts and reports furnished by the very same Spanish authorities that rule the Philippines, has demonstrated that such indolence does not exist, and that all said about it does not deserve reply or even passing notice.

Nevertheless, as discussion of it has been continued, not only by government employees who make it responsible for their own shortcomings, not only by the friars who regard it as necessary in order that they may continue to represent, themselves as

indispensable, but also by serious and disinterested persons; and as evidence of greater or less weight may be adduced in opposition to that which Dr. Sancianco cites, it seems expedient, to us to study this question thoroughly, without superciliousness or sensitiveness, without prejudice, without pessimism. And as we can only serve our country by telling the truth, however bit, tee it be, just as a flat and skilful negation cannot refute a real and positive fact, in spite of the brilliance of the arguments; as a mere affirmation is not sufficient to create something impossible, let us calmly examine the facts, using on our part all the impartiality of which a man is capable who is convinced that there is no redemption except upon solid bases of virtue.

The word indolence has been greatly misused in the sense of little love for work and lack of energy, while ridicule has concealed the misuse. This much-discussed question has met with the same fate as certain panaceas and specifies of the quacks who by ascribing to them impossible virtues have discredited them. In the Middle Ages, and even in some Catholic countries now, the devil is blamed for everything that superstitious folk cannot understand or the perversity of mankind is loath to confess. In the Philippines

one's own and another's faults, the shortcomings of one, the misdeeds of another, are attributed to indolence. And just as in the Middle Ages he who sought the explanation of phenomena outside of infernal influences was persecuted, so in the Philippines worse happens to him who seeks the origin of the trouble outside of accepted beliefs.

The consequence of this misuse is that there are some who are interested in stating it as a dogma and others in combating it as a ridiculous superstition, if not a punishable delusion. Yet it is not to be inferred from the misuse of a thing that it does not exist.

We think that there must be something behind all this outcry, for it is incredible that so many should err, among whom we have said there are a lot of serious and disinterested persons. Some act in bad faith, through levity, through want of sound judgment, through limitation in reasoning power, ignorance of the past, or other cause. Some repeat what they have heard, without, examination or reflection; others speak through pessimism or are impelled by that human characteristic which paints as perfect everything that belongs to oneself and defective whatever belongs to another. But it cannot be denied that there are some who worship truth, or if not truth

itself at least the semblance thereof, which is truth in the mind of the crowd.

Examining well, then, all the scenes and all the men that we have known from Childhood, and the life of our country, we believe that indolence does exist there. The Filipinos, who can measure up with the most active peoples in the world, will doubtless not repudiate this admission, for it is true that there one works and struggles against the climate, against nature and against men. But we must not take the exception for the general rule, and should rather seek the good of our country by stating what we believe to be true. We must confess that indolence does actually and positively exist there; only that, instead of holding it to be the cause of the backwardness and the trouble, we regard it as the effect of the trouble and the backwardness, by fostering the development of a lamentable predisposition.

Those who have as yet treated of indolence, with the exception of Dr. Sancianco, have been content to deny or affirm it. We know of no one who has studied its causes. Nevertheless, those who admit its existence and exaggerate it more or less have not therefore failed to advise remedies taken from here and there, from Java, from India, from other English

or Dutch colonies, like the quack who saw a fever cured with a dozen sardines and afterwards always prescribed these fish at every rise in temperature that he discovered in his patients.

We shall proceed otherwise. Before proposing a remedy we shall examine the causes, and even though strictly speaking a predisposition is not a cause, let us, however, study at its true value this predisposition due to nature.

The predisposition exists? Why shouldn't it?

A hot, climate requires of the individual quiet and rest, just as cold incites to labor and action. For this reason the Spaniard is more indolent than the Frenchman; the Frenchman more so than the German. The Europeans themselves who reproach the residents of the colonies so much (and I am not now speaking of the Spaniards but of the Germans and English themselves), how do they live in tropical countries? Surrounded by a numerous train of servants, never going afoot but riding in a carriage, needing servants not only to take off their shoes for them but even to fan them! And yet they live and eat better, they work for themselves to get rich, with the hope of a future, free and respected, while the poor

colonist, the indolent colonist, is badly nourished, has no hope, toils for others, and works under force and compulsion! Perhaps the reply to this will be that white men are not made to stand the severity of the climate. A mistake! A man can live in any climate, if he will only adapt himself to its requirements and conditions. What kills the European in hot countries is the abuse of liquors, the attempt to live according to the nature of his own country under another sky and another sun. We inhabitants of hot countries live well in northern Europe whenever we take the precautions the people there do. Europeans can also stand the torrid zone, if only they would get rid of their prejudices. (2) The fact is that in tropical countries violent work is not a good thing as it is in cold countries, there it is death, destruction, annihilation. Nature knows this and like a just mother has therefore made the earth more fertile, more productive, as a compensation. An hour's work under that burning sun, in the midst of pernicious influences springing from nature in activity, is equal to a day's work in a temperate climate; it is, then, just that the earth yield a hundred fold! Moreover, do we not see the active European, who has gained strength during the winter, who feels the fresh blood of spring boil in his veins, do we not see him abandon his

labors during the few days of his variable summer, close his office—where the work is not violent and amounts for many to talking and gesticulating in the shade and beside a lunch-stand,—flee to watering places, sit in the cafés or stroll about? What wonder then that the inhabitant of tropical countries, worm out and with his blood thinned by the continuous and excessive heat, is reduced to inaction? Who is the indolent one in the Manila offices? Is it the poor clerk who comes in at eight in the morning and leaves at, one in the afternoon with only his parasol, who copies and writes and works for himself and for his chief, or is it the chief, who comes in a carriage at ten o'clock, leaves before twelve, reads his newspaper while smoking and with is feet cocked up on a chair or a table, or gossiping about all his friends? Which is indolent, the native coadjutor, poorly paid and badly treated, who has to visit all the indigent sick living in the country, or the friar curate who gets fabulously rich, goes about in a carriage, eats and drinks well, and does not put himself to any trouble without collecting excessive fees? [3]

Without speaking further of the Europeans, in what violent labor does the Chinaman engage in tropical countries, the industrious Chinaman, who flees from

his own country driven by hunger and want, and whose whole ambition is to amass a small fortune? With the exception of some porters, an occupation that the natives also follow, he nearly always engages in trade, in commerce; so rarely does he take up agriculture that we do not know of a single case. The Chinaman who in other colonies cultivates the soil does so only for a certain number of years and then retires. [4]

We find, then, the tendency to indolence very natural, and have to admit and bless it, for we cannot alter natural laws, and without it the race would have disappeared. Man is not a brute, he is not a, machine; his object is not merely to produce, in spite of the pretensions of some Christian whites who would make of the colored Christian a kind of motive power somewhat more intelligent and less costly than steam. Man's object is not to satisfy tile passions of another man, his object is to seek happiness for himself and his kind by traveling along the road of progress and perfection.

The evil is not that indolence exists more or less latently but that it is fostered and magnified. Among men, as well as among nations, there exist not only aptitudes but also tendencies toward good and evil.

To foster the good ones and aid them, as well as correct the evil and repress them, would be the duty of society and governments, if less noble thoughts did not occupy their attention. The evil is that the indolence in the Philippines is a magnified indolence, an indolence of the snowball type, if we may be permitted the expression, an evil that increases in direct proportion to the square of the periods of time, an effect of misgovernment and of backwardness, as we said, and not a cause thereof. Others will hold the contrary opinion, especially those who have a hand in the misgovernment, but we do not care; we have made an assertion and are going to prove it.

II

When in consequence of a long chronic illness the condition of the patient is examined, the question may arise whether the weakening of the fibers and the debility of the organs are the cause of the malady's continuing or the effect of the bad treatment that prolongs its action. The attending physician attributes the entire failure of his skill to the poor constitution of the patient, to the climate, to the surroundings, and so on. On the other hand, the patient attributes the aggravation of the evil to the system of treatment followed. Only the common

crowd, the inquisitive populace, shakes its head and cannot reach a decision.

Something like this happens in the case of the Philippines. Instead of physician, read government, that is, friars, employees, etc. Instead of patient, Philippines; instead of malady, indolence.

And, just as happens in similar cases then the patient gets worse, everybody loses his head, each one dodges the responsibility to place it upon somebody else, and instead of seeking the causes in order to combat the evil in them, devotes himself at best to attacking the symptoms: here a blood-letting, a tax; there a plaster, forced labor; further on a sedative, a trifling reform. Every new arrival proposes a new remedy: one, seasons of prayer, the relics of a saint, the viaticum, the friars; another, a shower-bath; still another, with pretensions to modern ideas, a transfusion of blood. "It's nothing, only the patient has eight million indolent red corpuscles: some few white corpuscles in the form of an agricultural colony will get us out of the trouble."

So, on all sides there are groans, gnawing of lips, clenching of fists, many hollow words, great

ignorance, a deal of talk, a lot of fear. The patient is near his finish!

Yes, transfusion of blood, transfusion of blood! New life, new vitality! Yes, the new white corpuscles that you are going to inject into its veins, the new white corpuscles that were a cancer in another organism will withstand all the depravity of the system, will withstand the blood-lettings that it suffers every day, will have more stamina than all the eight million red corpuscles, will cure all the disorders, all the degeneration, all the trouble in the principal organs. Be thankful if they do not become coagulations and produce gangrene, be thankful if they do not reproduce the cancer!

While the patient breathes, we must not lose hope, and however late we be, a judicious examination is never superfluous; at least the cause of death may be known. We are not trying to put all the blame on the physician, and still less on the patient, for we have already spoken of a predisposition due to the climate, a reasonable and natural predisposition, in the absence of which the race would disappear, sacrificed to excessive labor in a tropical country.

Indolence in the Philippines is a chronic malady, but not a hereditary one. The Filipinos have not always been what they are, witnesses whereto are all the historians of the first years after the discovery of the Islands.

Before the arrival of the Europeans, the Malayan Filipinos carried on an active trade, not only among themselves but also with all the neighboring countries. A Chinese manuscript of the 13th century, translated by Dr. Hirth (Globus, Sept. 1889), which we will take up at another time, speaks of China's relations with the islands, relations purely commercial, in which mention is made of the activity and honesty of the traders of Luzon, who took the Chinese products and distributed them throughout all the islands, traveling for nine months, and then returned to pay religiously even for the merchandise that the Chinamen did not remember to have given them. The products which they in exchange exported from the islands were crude wax, cotton, pearls, tortoise-shell, betel-nuts, dry-goods, etc. [5]

The first thing noticed by Pigafetta, who came with Magellan in 1521, on arriving at the first island of the Philippines, Samar, was the courtesy and kindness of the inhabitants and their commerce. "To honor our

captain," he says, "they conducted him to their boats where they had their merchandise, which consisted of cloves, cinnamon, pepper, nutmegs, mace, gold and other things; and they made us understand by gestures that such articles were to be found in the islands to which we were going." [6]

Further on he speaks of the vessels and utensils of solid gold that he found in Butuan, where the people worked mines. He describes the silk dresses, the daggers with long gold hilts and scabbards of carved wood, the gold, sets of teeth, etc. Among cereals and fruits he mentions rice, millet, oranges, lemons, panicum, etc.

That the islands maintained relations with neighboring countries and even with distant ones is proven by the ships from Siam, laden with gold and slaves, that Magellan found in Cebu. These ships paid certain duties to the King of the island. In the same year, 1521, the survivors of Magellan's expedition met the son of the Rajah of Luzon, who, as captain-general of the Sultan of Borneo and admiral of his fleet, had conquered for him the great city of Lave (Sarawak?). Might this captain, who was greatly feared by all his foes, have been the Rajah

Matanda whom the Spaniards afterwards encountered in Tondo in 1570?

In 1539 the warriors of Luzon took part in the formidable contests of Sumatra, and under the orders of Angi Siry Timor, Rajah of Batta, conquered and overthrew the terrible Alzadin, Sultan of Atchin, renowned in the historical annals of the Far East. (Marsden, Hist. of Sumatra, Chap. XX.) (7)

At that time, that sea where float the islands like a set of emeralds on a paten of bright glass, that sea was everywhere traversed by junks, paraus, barangays, vintas, vessels swift as shuttles, so large that they could maintain a hundred rowers on a side (Morga;) that sea bore everywhere commerce, industry, agriculture, by the force of the oars moved to the sound of warlike songs (8) of the genealogies and achievements of the Philippine divinities. (Colin, Chap. XV.) (9)

Wealth abounded in the islands. Pigafetta tells us of the abundance of foodstuffs in Paragua and of its inhabitants, who nearly all tilled their own fields. At this island the survivors of Magellan's expedition were well received and provisioned. A little later, these same survivors captured a vessel, plundered

and sacked it, add took prisoner in it the chief of the Island of Paragua (!) with his son and brother. (10)

In this same vessel they captured bronze lombards, and this is the first mention of artillery of the Filipinos, for these lombards were useful to the chief of Paragua against the savages of the interior.

They let him ransom himself within seven days, demanding 400 measures (cavanes?) of rice, 20 pigs, 20 goats, and 450 chickens. This is the first act of piracy recorded in Philippine history. The chief of Paragua paid everything, and moreover voluntarily added coconuts, bananas, and sugar-cane jars filled with palm-wine. When Caesar was taken prisoner by the corsairs and required to pay twenty five talents ransom, he replied; "I'll give you fifty, but later I'll have you all crucified!" The chief of Paragua was more generous: he forgot. His conduct, while it may reveal weakness, also demonstrates that the islands were abundantly provisioned. This chief was named Tuan Mahamud; his brother, Guantil, and his son, Tuan Mahamed. (Martin Mendez, Purser of the ship Victoria: Archivos de Indias.)

A very extraordinary thing, and one that shows the facility with which the natives learned Spanish, is

that fifty years before the arrival of the Spaniards in Luzon, in that very year 1521 when they first came to the islands, there were already natives of Luzon who understood Castilian. In the treaties of peace that the survivors of Magellan's expedition made with the chief of Paragua, when the servant-interpreter died they communicated with one another through a Moro who had been captured in the island of the King of Luzon and who understood some Spanish. (Martin Mendez, op, cit) Where did this extemporaneous interpreter learn Castilian? In the Moluccas? In Malacca, with the Portuguese? Spaniards did not reach Luzon until 1571.

Legazpi's expedition met in Butuan various traders of Luzon with their boats laden with iron, wax cloths, porcelain, etc. (Gaspar de San Agustin,) plenty of provisions, activity, trade, movement in all the southern islands. (11)

They arrived at the Island of Cebu, "abounding in provisions, with mines and washings of gold, and peopled with natives," as Morga says; "very populous, and at a port frequented by many ships that came from the islands and kingdoms near India," as Colin says; and even though they were peacefully received discord soon arose. The city was taken by

force and burned. The fire destroyed the food supplies and naturally famine broke out in that town of a hundred thousand people, (12) as the historians say, and among the members of the expedition, but the neighboring islands quickly relieved the need, thanks to the abundance they enjoyed.

All the histories of those first years, in short, abound in long accounts about the industry and agriculture of the natives: mines, gold-washings, looms, farms, barter, naval construction, raising of poultry and stock, weaving of silk and cotton, distilleries, manufactures of arms, pearl fisheries, the civet industry, the horn and hide industry, etc., are things encountered at every step, and, considering the time and the conditions in the islands, prove that there was life, there was activity, there was movement.

And if this, which is deduction, does not convince any minds imbued with unfair prejudices, perhaps of some avail may be the testimony of the oft-quoted Dr. Morga, who was Lieutenant-Governor of Manila for seven years and after rendering great service in the Archipelago was appointed criminal judge of the Audiencia of Mexico and Counsellor of the Inquisition. His testimony, we say, is highly credible, not only because all his contemporaries have spoken

of him in terms that border on veneration but also because his work, from which we take these citations, is written with great circumspection and care, as well with reference to the authorities in the Philippines as to the errors they committed. "The natives," says Morga, in chapter VII, speaking of the occupations of the Chinese, "are very far from exercising those trades and have even forgotten much about farming, raising poultry, stock and cotton, and weaving cloth AS THEY USED TO DO IN THEIR PAGANISM AND FOR A LONG TIME AFTER THE COUNTRY WAS CONQUERED." (13)

The whole of chapter VIII of his work deals with this moribund activity, this much-forgotten industry, and yet in spite of that, how long is his eighth chapter!

And not only Morga, not only Chirino, Colin, Argensola, Gaspar de San Agustin and others agree in this matter, but modern travelers, after two hundred and fifty years, examining the decadence and misery, assert the same thing. Dr. Hans Meyer, when he saw the unsubdued tribes cultivating beautiful fields and working energetically, asked if they would not become indolent when they in turn should accept Christianity and a paternal government.

Accordingly, the Filipinos, in spite of the climate, in spite of their few needs (they were less then than now), were not the indolent creatures of our time, and, as we shall see later on, their ethics and their mode of life were not what is now complacently attributed to them.

How then, and in what way, was that active and enterprising infidel native of ancient times converted into the lazy and indolent Christian, as our contemporary writer's say?

We have already spoken of the more or less latent predisposition which exists in the Philippines toward indolence, and which must exist everywhere, in the whole world, in all men, because we all hate work more or less, as it may be more or less hard, more or less unproductive. The dolce far niente of the Italian, the rascarse la barriga of the Spaniard, the supreme aspiration of the bourgeois to live on his income in peace and tranquility, attest this.

What causes operated to awake this terrible predisposition from its lethargy? How is it that the Filipino people, so fond of its customs as to border on routine, has given up its ancient habits of work, of

trade, of navigation, etc., even to the extent of completely forgetting its past?

III

A fatal combination of circumstances, some independent of the will in spite of men's efforts, others the offspring of stupidity and ignorance, others the inevitable corollaries of false principles, and still others the result of more or less base passions has induced the decline of labor, an evil which instead of being remedied by prudence, mature reflection and recognition of the mistakes made, through deplorable policy, through regret, table blindness and obstinacy, has gone from bad to worse until it has reached the condition in which we now see it. (14).

First came the wars, the internal disorders which the new change of affairs naturally brought with it. It was necessary to subject the people either by cajolery or force; there were fights, there was slaughter; those who had submitted peacefully seemed to repent of it; insurrections were suspected, and some occurred; naturally there were executions, and many capable laborers perished. Add to this condition of disorder the invasion of Limahong, add the continual wars into which the inhabitants of the Philippines were

plunged to maintain the honor of Spain, to extend the sway of her flag in Borneo, in the Moluccas and in Indo-China; to repel the Dutch foe: costly wars, fruitless expeditions, in which each time thousands and thousands of native archers and rowers were recorded to have embarked, but whether they returned to their homes was never stated. Like the tribute that once upon a time Greece sent to the Minotaur of Crete, the Philippine youth embarked for the expedition, saying good-by to their country forever: on their horizon were the stormy sea, the interminable wars, the rash expeditions. Wherefore, Gaspar de San Agustin says: "Although anciently there were in this town of Dumangas many people, in the course of time they have very greatly diminished because the natives are the best sailors and most skillful rowers on the whole coast, and so the governors in the port of Iloilo take most of the people from this town for the ships that they send abroad ……. When the Spaniards reached this island (Panay) it is said that there were on it more than fifty thousand families; but these diminished greatly; …….. and at present they may amount to some fourteen thousand tributaries." From fifty thousand families to fourteen thousand tributaries in little over half a century!

We would never get through, had we to quote all the evidence of the authors regarding the frightful diminution of the inhabitants of the Philippines in the first years after the discovery. In the time of their first bishop, that is, ten years after Legazpi, Philip II said that they had been reduced to less than two thirds.

Add to these fatal expeditions that wasted all the moral and material energies of the country, the frightful inroads of the terrible pirates from the south, instigated and encouraged by the government, first in order to get complaint and afterwards disarm the islands subjected to it, inroads that reached the very shores of Manila, even Malate itself, and during which were seen to set out for captivity and slavery, in the baleful glow of burning villages, strings of wretches who had been unable to defend themselves, leaving behind them the ashes of their homes and the corpses of their parents and children. Morga, who recounts the first piratical invasion, says: "The boldness of these people of Mindanao did great damage to the Visayan Islands, as much by what they did in them as by the fear and fright which the native acquired, because the latter were in the power of the Spaniards, who held them subject and tributary and unarmed, in such manner that they did not protect

them from their enemies or leave them means with which to defend themselves, AS THEY DID WHEN THERE WERE NO SPANIARDS IN THE COUNTRY." These piratical attacks continually reduced the number of the inhabitants of the Philippines, since the independent Malays were especially notorious for their atrocities and murders, sometimes because they believed that to preserve their independence it was necessary to weaken the Spaniard by reducing the number of his subjects, sometimes because a greater hatred and a deeper resentment inspired them against the Christian Filipinos who, being of the their own race, served the stranger in order to deprive them of their precious liberty. These expeditions lasted about three centuries, being repeated five and ten times a year, and each expedition cost the islands over eight hundred prisoners.

"With the invasions of the pirates from Sulu and Mindanao," says Padre Gaspar de San Agustin, [the island of Bantayan, near Cebu] "has been greatly reduced, because they easily captured the people there, since the latter had no place to fortify themselves and were far from help from Cebu. The

hostile Sulu did great damage in this island in 1608, leaving it almost depopulated." (Page 380).

These rough attacks, coming from without, produced a counter effect, in the interior, which, carrying out medical comparisons, was like a purge or diet in an individual who has just lost a great deal of blood. In order to make headway against so many calamities, to secure their sovereignty and take the offensive in these disastrous contests, to isolate the warlike Sulus from their neighbors in the south, to care for the needs of the empire of the Indies (for one of the reasons why the Philippines were kept, as contemporary documents prove, was their strategic position between New Spain and the Indies), to wrest from the Dutch their growing colonies of the Moluccas and get rid of some troublesome neighbors, to maintain, in short, the trade of China with New Spain. it was necessary to construct new and large ships which, as we have seen, costly as they were to the country for their equipment and the rowers they required, were not less so because of the manner in which they were constructed. (16) Fernando de los Rios Coronel, who fought in these wars and later turned priest, speaking of these King's ships, said: "As they were so large, the timber needed was

scarcely to be found in the forests (of the Philippines!), and thus it was necessary to seek it with great difficulty in the most remote of them, where, once found, in order to haul and convey it to the shipyard the towns of the surrounding country had to be depopulated of natives, who get it out with immense labor, damage, and cost to them. The natives furnished the masts for a galleon, according to the assertion of the Franciscans, and I heard the governor of the province where they were cut, which is Lacuna de Bay, say that to haul them seven leagues over very broken mountains 6,000 natives were engaged three months, without furnishing them food, which the wretched native had to seek for himself!"

And Gaspar de San Agustin says: "In those times (1690), Bacolor has not the people that it had in the past, because of the uprising in that province when Don Sabiniano Manrique de Lava was Governor of these islands and because of the continual labor of cutting timber for his Majesty's shipyards, WHICH HINDERS THEM FROM CULTIVATING THE VERY FERTILE PLAIN THEY HAVE." (17)

If this is not sufficient to explain the depopulation of the islands and the abandonment of industry, agriculture and commerce, then add "the natives who

wore executed, those who loft their wives and children and fled in disgust to the mountains, those who were sold into slavery to pay the taxes levied upon them," as Fernando de los Rios Coronel says; add to all this what Philip II said in reprimanding Bishos Salazar about "natives sold by some encomendoros to others, those flogged to death, the women who are crushed to death by their heavy burdens, those who sleep in the fields and there bear and nurse their children and die bitten by poisonous vermin, the many who are executed and left to die of hunger and those who eat poisonous herbs …… and the mothers who kill their children in bearing them," and you will understand how in less than thirty years the population of the Philippines was reduced one-third. We are not saying this: it was said by Gaspar de San Agustin, the preeminently anti-Filipino Augustinian, and he confirms it throughout the rest of his work by speaking every moment of the state of neglect in which lay the farms and fields once so flourishing and so well cultivated, the towns thinned that had formerly been inhabited by many leading families!

How is it strange, then, that discouragement may have been infused into the spirit of the inhabitants of

the Philippines, when in the midst of so many calamities they did not know whether they would see sprout the seed they were planting, whether their field was going to be their grave or their crop would go to feed their executioner? What is there strange in it, when we see the pious but impotent friars of that time trying to free their poor parishioners from the tyranny of the encomenderos by advising them to stop work in the mines, to abandon their commerce, to break up their looms, pointing out to them heaven for their whole hope, preparing them for death as their only consolation? (18)

Man works for an object. Remove the object and you reduce him to inaction The most active man in the world will fold his arms from the instant he understands that it is madness to bestir himself, that this work will be the cause of his trouble, that for him it will be the cause of vexations at home and of the pirate's greed abroad. It seems that these thoughts have never entered the minds of those who cry out against the indolence of the Filipinos.

Even were the Filipino not a man like the rest; even were we to suppose that zeal in him for work was as essential as the movement of a wheel caught in the gearing of others in motion; even were we to deny

him foresight and the judgment that the past and the present form, there would still be left us another reason to explain the attack of the evil. The abandonment of the fields by their cultivators, whom the wars and piratical attacks dragged from their homes was sufficient to reduce to nothing the hard labor of so many generations. In the Philippines abandon for a year the land most beautifully tended and you will see how you will have to begin all over again: the rain will wipe out the furrows, the floods will drown the seeds, plants and bushes will grow up everywhere, and on seeing so much useless labor the hand will drop the hoe, the laborer will desert his plow. Isn't there left the fine life of the pirate?

Thus is understood that sad discouragement which we find in the friar writers of the 17th century, speaking of once very fertile plains submerged, of provinces and towns depopulated, of products that have disappeared from trade, of leading families exterminated. These pages resemble a sad and monotonous scene in the night after a lively day. Of Cagayan Padre San Agustin speaks with mournful brevity: "A great deal of cotton, of which they made good cloth that the Chinese and Japanese every year

bought and carried away." In the historian's time, the industry and the trade had come to an end!

It seems that these are causes more thorn sufficient to breed indolence even in the midst of beehive. Thus is explained why, after thirty-two years of the system, the circumspect and prudent Morga said that the natives "have forgotten much about farming, raising poultry, stock and cotton, and weaving cloth, as they used to do in their paganism and FOR A LONG TIME AFTER THE COUNTRY HAD BEEN CONQUERED!"

Still they struggled a long time against indolence, yes: but their enemies were so numerous that at last they gave up!

IV

We recognize the causes that, awoke the predisposition and provoked the evil: now let us see what foster and sustain it. In this connection, government and governed have to bow our heads and say: we deserve our fate.

We have already truly said that when a house becomes disturbed and disordered, we should not accuse the youngest, child or the servants, but the head of it, especially if his authority is unlimited, he

who does not act freely is not responsible for his actions; and the Filipino people, not being master of its liberty, is not responsible for either its misfortunes or its woes. We says this, it is true, but, as will be seen later on, we also have a large part, in the continuation of such a disorder.

The following, among other causes, contributed to foster the evil and aggravate it: the constantly lessening encouragement that labor has met with in the Philippines. Fearing to have the Filipinos deal frequently with other individuals of their own race, who were free and independent, as the Borneans, the Siamese, the Cambodians, and the Japanese, people who in their customs and feeling's differ greatly from the Chinese, the Government acted toward these others with great mistrust and great severity, as Morga testifies in the last pages of his work, until they finally ceased to come to the country. In fact, it seems that once an uprising' planned by the Borneans was suspected: we say suspected, for there was not even an attempt, although there were many executions. (19) And, as these nations were the very ones that, consumed Philippine products, when all communication with them had been cut off, consumption of these products also ceased. The only

two countries with which the Philippines continued to have relations were China and Mexico, or New Spain, and from this trade only China and a few private individuals in Manila got any benefit. It, fact, the Celestial Empire sent, her junks laden with merchandise, that merchandise which shut down the factories of Seville and ruined the Spanish industry, and returned laden in exchange with the silver that was every year sent from Mexico. Nothing from the Philippines at that time went to China, not even gold, for in those years the Chinese traders would accept no payment but silver coin. (20) To Mexico went little more: some cloth and dry goods which the encomendoros took by force or bought from the natives at, a paltry price, wax, amber, gold, civet, etc, but nothing more, and not even in great quantity, as is stated by Admiral Don Jerónimo de Bañuelos y Carrillo, when he begged the King that "the inhabitants of the Manilas be permitted (!) to load as many ships as they could with native products, such as wax, gold, perfumes, ivory, cotton cloths, which they would have to buy from the natives of the country …… Thus the friendship of those peoples would be gained, they would furnish New Spain with their merchandise and the money that is brought to Manila, would not leave this place," (21)

The coastwise trade, so active in other times, had to die out, thanks to the piratical attacks of the Malays of the south; and trade in the interior of the islands almost entirely disappeared, owing to restrictions, passports and other administrative requirements.

Of no little importance were the hindrances and obstacles that from the beginning were thrown in the farmers's way by the rulers, who were influenced by childish fear and saw everywhere signs of conspiracies and uprisings. The natives were not allowed to go to their labors, that is, their farms, without permission of the governor, or of his agents and officers, and even of the priests as Morga says. Those who know the administrative slackness and confusion in a country where the officials work scarcely two hours a day; those who know the cost of going to and returning from the capital to obtain a permit; those who are aware of the petty retaliations of the little tyrants will well understand how with this crude arrangement it is possible to have the most absurd agriculture. True it is that for some time this absurdity, which would be ludicrous had it not been so serious, has disappeared; but even if the words have gone out of use other facts and other provisions have replaced them. The Moro pirate has disappeared

but there remains the outlaw who infests the fields and waylays the farmer to hold him for ransom. Now then, the government, which has a constant fear of the people, denies to the farmers even the use of a shotgun, or if it does allow it does so very grudgingly and withdraws it at pleasure; whence it results with the laborer, who, thanks to his means of defense, plants his crops and invests his meager fortune in the furrows that he has so laboriously opened, that when his crop matures, it occurs to the government, which is impotent to suppress brigandage, to deprive him of his weapon; and then, without defense and without security he is reduced to inaction and abandons his field, his work, and takes to gambling as the best means of securing a livelihood. The green cloth is under the protection of the government, it is safer! A mournful counselor is fear, for it not only causes weakness but also in casting aside the weapons strengthens the very persecutor!

The sordid return the native gets from his work has the effect of discouraging him. We know from history that the encomenderos, after reducing many to slavery and forcing them to work for their benefit, made others give up their merchandise for a trifle or nothing at all, or cheated them with false measures.

Speaking of Ipion, in Panay, Padre Gaspar de San Agustin says: "It was in ancient times very rich in gold, …… but provoked by the annoyances they suffered from some governors they have ceased to get it out, preferring to live in poverty than to suffer such hardships." (Page 378). Further on, speaking of other towns, he says: "Goaded by the ill treatment of the encomenderos who in administering justice have treated the natives as their slaves and not as their children, and have only looked after their own interests at the expense of the wretched fortunes and lives of their charges ……" (Page 422) Further on: "In Leyte, where they tried to kill an encomendero of the town of Dagami on account of the great hardships he made them suffer by exacting tribute of wax from them with a steelyard which he had made twice as long as the others"

This state of affairs lasted a long time and still lasts, in spite of the fact, that the breed of encomenderos has become extinct. A term passes away but the evil and the passions engendered do not pass away so long as reforms are devoted solely to changing the names.

The wars with the Dutch, the inroads and piratical attacks of the people of Sulu and Mindanao

disappeared; the people have been transformed; new towns have grown up while others have become impoverished; but the frauds subsist as much as or worse than they did in those early years. We will not cite our own experiences, for aside from the fact that, we do not know which to select, critical persons may reproach us with partiality; neither will we cite those of other Filipinos who write in the newspapers; but we shall confine ourselves to translating the words of a modern French traveler who was in the Philippines for a long time:

"The good curate," he says with reference to the rosy picture a friar had given him of the Philippines, "had not told me about the governor, the foremost official of the district, who was too much taken up with the ideal of getting rich to have time to tyrannize over his docile subjects; the governor, charged with ruling the country and collecting the various taxes in the government's name, devoted himself almost wholly to trade; in his hands the high and noble functions he performs are nothing more than instruments of gain. He monopolizes all the business and instead of developing on his part the love of work, instead of stimulating the too natural indolence of the natives, he with abuse of his powers thinks only of destroying

all competition that may trouble him or attempt to participate in his profits. It matters little to him that the country is impoverished, without cultivation, without commerce, without, industry, just so the governor is quickly enriched!"

Yet the traveler has been unfair in picking out the governor especially: Why only the governor?

We do not cite passages from other authors, because we have not their works at hand and do not wish to quote from memory.

The great difficulty that every enterprise encountered with the administration contributed not a little to kill off all commercial and industrial movement. All the Filipinos, as well as all those who have tried to engage in business in the Philippines, know how many documents, what comings, how many stamped papers, how much patience is needed to secure from the government a permit for an enterprise. One must count upon the good will of this one, on the influence of that one, on a good bribe to another in order that the application be not pigeonholed, a present to the one further on so that he may pass it on to his chief; one must pray to God to give him good humor and time to see and examine it; to another, talent to

recognize its expediency; to one further on sufficient stupidity not to scent behind the enterprise an insurrectionary purpose; and that they may not all spend the time taking baths, hunting or playing cards with the reverend friars in their convents or country houses. And above all, great patience, great knowledge of how to get along, plenty of money, a great deal of politics, many salutations, great influence, plenty of presents and complete resignation! How is it strange that, the Philippines remain poor in spite of their very fertile soil, when history tells us that the countries now the most flourishing date their development from the day of their liberty and civil rights? The most commercial and most industrious countries have been the freest countries: France, England and the United States prove this. Hongkong, which is not worth the most insignificant of the Philippines, has more commercial movement than all the islands together, because it is free and is well governed.

The trade with China, which was the whole occupation of the colonizers of the Philippines, was not only prejudicial to Spain but also to the life of her colonies; in fact, when the officials and private persons at Manila found an easy method of getting

rich they neglected everything. They paid no attention either to cultivating the soil or to fostering industry; and wherefore? China furnished the trade, and they had only to take advantage of it and pick up the gold that dropped out on its way from Mexico toward the interior of China, the gulf whence it never returned.

The pernicious example of the dominators in surrounding themselves with servants and despising manual or corporal labor as a thing unbecoming the nobility and chivalrous pride of the heroes of so many centuries; those lordly airs, which the natives have translated into tila ka castila, and the desire of the dominated to be the equal of the dominators, if not essentially, at least in their manners: all this had naturally to produce aversion to activity and fear or hatred of work.

Moreover, 'Why work?' asked many natives. The curate says that the rich man will not go to heaven The rich man on earth is liable to all kinds of trouble, to be appointed a cabeza de barangay, to be deported if an uprising occurs, to be forced banker of the military chief of the town, who to reward him for favors received seizes his laborers and his stock, in order to force him to beg for mercy, and thus easily

pays up. Why be rich? So that all the officers of justice may have a lynx eye on your actions, so that at the least slip enemies may be raised up against you, you may be indicted, a whole complicated and labyrinthine story may be concocted against you, for which you can only get away, not by the thread of Ariadne but by Danae's shower of gold, and still give thanks that you are not kept in reserve for some needy occasion? The native, whom they pretend to regard as an imbecile, is not so much so that he does not understand that it is ridiculous to work himself to death to become worse off. A proverb of his says that the pig is cooked in its own lard, and as among his bad qualities he has the good one of applying to himself all the criticisms and censures he prefers to live miserable and indolent, rather than play the part of the wretched beast of burden.

Add to this the introduction of gambling. We do not mean to san that before the coming of the Spaniards the natives did not gamble: the passion for grumbling is innate in adventuresome and excitable races, and such is the Malay. Pigafetta tells us of cock-fights and of bets in the Island of Paragua. Cock-fighting must also have existed in Luzon and in all the islands, for in the terminology of the game are two

Tagalog words: sabong, and tari (cockpit and gaff). But there is not the least doubt that the fostering of this game is due to the government, as well as the perfecting of it. Although Pigafetta tells us of it, he mentions it only in Paragua, and not in Cebu nor in any other island of the south, where he stayed long time. Morga does not speak of it, in spite of his having spent seven years in Manila, and yet he does describe the kinds of fowl, the jungle hens and cocks. Neither does Morga, speak of gambling, when he talks about vices and other defects, more or less concealed, more or less insignificant. Moreover, excepting the two Tagalog words sabong and tari, the others are of Spanish origin, as soltada (setting the cocks to fight, then the fight itself), presto, (apuesta, bet), logro (winnings), pago (payment), sentenciador (referee), case (to cover the bets), etc. We say the same about gambling: the word sugal (jugar, to gamble), like kumpisal (confesar, to confess to a priest), indicates that gambling was unknown in the Philippines before the Spaniards. The word laró (Tagalog, to play) is not the equivalent of the word sunni. The word balasa (baraja, playing-card) proves that the introduction of playing-cards was not due to the Chinese, who have a kind of playing-cards also, because in that case they would have taken the

Chinese name. Is not this enough? The word tayá (taltar, to bet), paris-paris (Spanish pares, pairs of cards), politana (napolitana, a winning sequence of cards), sapore (to stack the cards), kapote (to slam), monte, and so on, all prove the foreign origin of this terrible plant, which only produces vice, and which has found in the character of the native a fit soil, cultivated by circumstances.

Along with gambling, which breeds dislike for steady and difficult toil by its promise of sudden wealth and its appeal to the emotions, with the lotteries, with the prodigality and hospitality of the Filipinos, went also, to swell this train of misfortunes, the religious functions, the great number of fiestas, the long masses for the women to spend their mornings and the novenaries to spend their afternoons, and the night, for the processions and rosaries. Remember that lack of capital and absence of means paralyze all movement, and you will see how the native has perforce to be indolent for if any money might remain to him from the trials, imposts and exactions, he would have to give it to the curate for bulls, scapularies, candles, novenaries, etc. And if this does not suffice to form an indolent character, if the climate and nature are not enough in themselves to

daze him and deprive him of all energy, recall then that the doctrines of his religion teach him to irrigate his fields in the dry season, not by means of canals but with masses and prayers; to preserve his stock during an epizootic with holy water, exorcisms and benedictions that cost five dollars an animal; to drive away the locusts by a procession with the image of St. Augustine, etc. It is well, undoubtedly, to trust greatly in God; but it is better to do what one can and not trouble the Creator every moment, even when these appeals redound to the benefit of His ministers. We have noticed that the countries which believe most in miracles are the laziest, just, as spoiled children are the most ill-mannered. Whether they believe in miracles to palliate their laziness or they are lazy because they believe in miracles, we cannot say; but the fact is the Filipinos were much less lazy before the word miracle was introduced into their language.

The facility with which individual liberty is curtailed, that continual alarm of all from the knowledge that they are liable to secret report, a governmental ukase, and to the accusation of rebel or suspect, an accusation which, to be effective, does not need proof or the production of the accuser. With that lack of

confidence in the future, that uncertainty of reaping the reward of labor, as in a city stricken with the plague, everybody yields to fate, shuts himself in his house or goes about amusing himself in the attempt to spend the few days that remain to him in the least disagreeable way possible.

The apathy of the government itself toward everything in commerce and agriculture contributes not a little to foster indolence. There is no encouragement, at all for the manufacturer or for the farmer; the government furnishes no aid either when poor crop comes, when the locusts (23) sweep over the fields, or when a cyclone destroys in its passage the wealth of the soil; nor does it take any trouble to seek a market for the products of its colonies. Why should it do so when these same products are burdened with taxes and imposts and have not free entry into the ports, of the mother country, nor is their consumption there encouraged? While we see all the walls of London covered with advertisements of the products of its colonies, while the English make heroic efforts to substitute Ceylon for Chinese tea, beginning with the sacrifice of their taste and their stomach, in Spain, with the exception of tobacco, nothing from the Philippines is known: neither its

sugar, coffee, hemp, fine cloths, nor its Ilocano blankets. The name of Manila is known only from those cloths of China or Indo-China which at one time reached Spain by way of Manila, heavy silk shawls, fantastically but coarsely embroidered, which no one has thought of imitating in Manila, since they are so easily made; but the government has other cares, and the Filipinos do not know that such objects are more highly esteemed in the Peninsula than their delicate piña, embroideries and their very fine jusi fabrics. Thus disappeared our trade in indigo, thanks to the trickery of the Chinese, which the government could not guard against, occupied as it was with other thoughts; thus die now the other industries; the fine manufactures of the Visayas are gradually disappearing from trade and even from use; the people, continually getting poorer, cannot afford the costly cloths and have to be content with calico or the imitations of the Germans, who produce imitations even of the work of our silversmiths.

The fact that the best plantations, the best tracts of land in some provinces, those that from their easy access are more profitable than others, are in the hands of the religious corporations, whose desideratum is ignorance and a condition of semi-

starvation for the native, so that they may continue to govern him and make themselves necessary to his wretched existence, is one of the reasons why many towns do not progress in spite of the efforts of their inhabitants. We will be met with the objections, as an argument on the other side, that the towns which belong to the friars are comparatively richer than those which do not belong to them. They surely are! Just as their brethren in Europe, in founding their convents, knew how to select the best valleys, the best uplands for the cultivation of the vine or the production of beer, so also the Philippine monks (25) have known how to select the best towns, the beautiful plains, the well-watered fields, to make of them rich plantations. For some time the friars have deceived many by making them believe that if these plantations were prospering, it was because they were under their care, and the indolence of the native was thus emphasized; but they forget that in same provinces where they have not been able for some reason to get possession of the best tracts of land, their plantations, like Baurand and Liang, are inferior to Taal, Balayan and Lipa, regions cultivated entirely by the natives without any monkish interference whatsoever.

Add to this lack of material inducement the absentee of moral stimulus, and you will see how he who is not indolent in that country must needs be a madman or at least a fool. What future awaits him who distinguishes himself, him who studies, who rises above the crowd? At the cost of study and sacrifice a young man becomes a great chemist, and after a long course of training, wherein neither the government nor anybody has given him the least help, he concludes his long stay in the University. A competitive examination is held to fill a certain position. The young man wins this through knowledge and perseverance, and after he has won it, it is abolished, because …… we do not care to give the reason, but when a municipal laboratory is closed in order to abolish the position of director, who got his place by competitive examination, while other officers, such as the press censor, are preserved, it is because the belief exists that the light of progress may injure the people more than all the adulterated foods (26). In the same way, another young man won a prize in a literary competition, and as long as his origin was unknown his work was discussed, the newspapers praised it and it was regarded as a masterpiece, but the sealed envelopes were opened, the winner proved to be a native, while among the

losers there were Peninsulars; then all the newspapers hastened to extol the losers! Not one word from the government, nor from anybody, to encourage the native who with so much affection was cultivating the language and letters of the mother country! (27)

Finally, passing over many other more or less insignificant reasons, the enumeration of which would be interminable, let us close this dreary list with the principal and most terrible of all: the education of the native.

From his birth until he sinks into his grave, the training of the native is brutalizing, depressive and antihuman (the word 'inhuman' is not sufficiently explanatory: whether or not the Academy admit it, let it go). There is no doubt that the government, some priests like the Jesuits and some Dominicans like Padre Benavides, have done a great deal by founding colleges, schools of primary instruction, and the like. But this is not enough; their effect is neutralized. They amount to five or ten years (years of a hundred and fifty days at most) during which the youth comes in contact with books selected by those very priests who boldly proclaim that it is an evil for the natives to know Castilian, that the native should not be separated from his carabao, that he should not have

any further aspirations, and so on; five to ten years during which the majority of the students have grasped nothing more than that no one understands what the books say, not even the professors themselves perhaps; and these five to ten years have to offset the daily preachment of the whole life, that preachment which lowers the dignity of man, which by degrees brutally deprives him of the sentiment of self-esteem, that eternal, stubborn, constant labor to bow the native's neck, to make him accept the yoke, to place him on a level with the beast—a labor aided by some persons, with or without the ability to write, which if it does not produce in some individuals the desired effect, in others it has the opposite effect, like the breaking of a cord that is stretched too tightly. Thus, while they attempt to make of the native a kind of animal, vet in exchange they demand of him divine actions. And we say divine actions, because he must be a god who does not become indolent in that climate, surrounded by the circumstances mentioned. Deprive a man, then, of his dignity, and you not only deprive him of his moral strength but you also make him useless even for those who wish to make use of him. Every creature has its stimulus, its mainspring: man's is his self-esteem. Take it away from him and

he is a corpse, and he who seeks activity in a corpse will encounter only worms.

Thus is explained how the natives of the present time are no longer the same as those of the time of the discovery, neither morally nor physically.

The ancient writers, like Chirino, Morga and Colin, take pleasure in describing them as well-featured, with good aptitudes for any thing they take up, keen and susceptible and of resolute will, very clean and neat in their persons and clothing, and of good mien and bearing. (Morga). Others delight in minute accounts of their intelligence and pleasant manners, of their aptitude for music, the drama, dancing and singing; of the facility with which they learned, not only Spanish but also Latin, which they acquired almost by themselves (Colin); others, of their exquisite politeness in their dealings and in their social life; others, like the first Augustinians, whose accounts Gaspar de San Augustin copies, found them more gallant and better mannered than the inhabitants of the Moluccas. "All live off their husbandry," adds Morga, "their farms, fisheries and enterprises, for they travel from island to island by sea and from province to province by land."

In exchange, the writers of the present time, without being better than those of former times, neither as men nor as historians, without being more gallant than Hernan Cortez and Salcedo, nor more prudent than Legazpi, nor more manly than Morga, nor more studious than Colin and Gaspar de San Agustin, our contemporary writers, we say, find that the native is a creature something more than a monkey but much less than a man, an anthropoid, dull-witted, stupid, timid, dirty, cringing, grinning, ill-clothed, indolent, lazy, brainless, immoral, etc., etc.

To what is this retrogression due? Is it the delectable civilization, the religion of salvation of the friars, called of Jesus Christ by a euphemism, that has produced this miracle, that has atrophied his brain, paralyzed his heart and made of the man this sort of vicious animal that the writers depict?

Alas! The whole misfortune of the present Filipinos consists in that they have become only half-way brutes. The Filipino is convinced that to get happiness it is necessary for him to lay aside his dignity as a rational creature, to attend mass, to believe what is told him, to pay what is demanded of him, to pay and forever to pay; to work, suffer and be silent, without aspiring to anything, without aspiring

to know or even to understand Spanish, without separating himself from his carabao, as the priests shamelessly say, without protesting against any injustice, against any arbitrary action, against an assault, against an insult; that is, not to have heart, brain or spirit: a creature with arms and a purse full of gold …… there's the ideal native! Unfortunately, or because the brutalization is not yet complete and because the nature of man is inherent in his being in spite of his condition, the native protests; he still has aspirations, he thinks and strives to rise, and there's the trouble!

v

In the preceding chapter we set forth the causes that proceed from the government in fostering and maintaining the evil we are discussing. Now it falls to us to analyze those that emanate from the people. Peoples and governments are correlated and complementary: a fatuous government would be an anomaly among righteous people, just as a corrupt people cannot exist under just rulers and wise laws. Like people, like government, we will say in paraphrase of a popular adage.

We can reduce all these causes to two classes: to defects of training and lack of national sentiment.

Of the influence of climate we spoke at the beginning, so we will not treat of the effects arising from it.

The very limited training in the home, the tyrannical and sterile education of the rare centers of learning, that blind subordination of the youth to one of greater age, influence the mind so that a man may not aspire to excel those who preceded him but must merely be content to go along with or march behind them. Stagnation forcibly results from this, and as he who devotes himself merely to copying divests himself of other qualities suited to his own nature, he naturally becomes sterile; hence decadence. Indolence is a corollary derived from the lack of stimulus and of vitality.

That modesty infused into the convictions of every one, or, to speak more clearly, that insinuated inferiority, a sort of daily and constant depreciation of the mind so that, it may not be raised to the regions of light, deadens the energies, paralyzes all tendency toward advancement, and at the least struggle a man gives up without fighting. If by one of

those rare accidents, some wild spirit, that is, some active one, excels, instead of his example stimulating, it only causes others to persist in their inaction. 'There's one who will work for us: let's sleep on!' say his relatives and friends. True it is that the spirit of rivalry is sometimes awakened, only that then it awakens with bad humor in the guise of envy, and instead of being a lever for helping, it is an obstacle that produces discouragement.

Nurtured by the example of anchorites of a contemplative and lazy life, the natives spend theirs in giving their gold to the Church in the hope of miracles and other wonderful things. Their will is hypnotized: from childhood they learn to act mechanically, without knowledge of the object, thanks to the exercises imposed upon them from the tenderest years of praying for whole hours in an unknown tongue, of venerating things that they do not understand, of accepting beliefs that are not explained to them to having absurdities imposed upon them, while the protests of reason are repressed. Is it any wonder that with this vicious dressage of intelligence and will the native, of old logical and consistent—as the analysis of his past and of his language demonstrates—should now be a mass of

dismal contradictions? That continual struggle between reason and duty, between his organism and his new ideals, that civil war which disturbs the peace of his conscience all his life, has the result, of paralyzing all his energies, and aided by the severity of the climate, makes of that eternal vacillation, of the doubts in his brain, the origin of his indolent disposition.

"You can't know more than this or that old man!" "Don't aspire to be greater than the curate!" "You belong to an inferior race!" "You haven't any energy!" This is what they tell the child, and as they repeat it so often, it has perforce to become engraved on his mind and thence mould and pervade all his actions. The child or youth who tries to be anything else is blamed with vanity and presumption; the curate ridicules him with cruel sarcasm, his relatives look upon him with fear, strangers regard him with great compassion. No forward movement! Get back in the ranks and keep in line!

With his spirit thus moulded the native falls into the most pernicious of all routines: routine not planned, but imposed and forced. Note that the native himself is not, naturally inclined to routine, but his mind is disposed to accept all truths, just as his house is open

to all strangers. The good and the beautiful attract him, seduce and captivate him, although, like the Japanese, he often exchanges the good for the evil, if it appears to him garnished and gilded. What he lacks is in the first place liberty to allow expansion to his adventuresome spirit, and good examples, beautiful prospects for the future. It is necessary that his spirit, although it may be dismayed and cowed by the elements and the fearful manifestation of their mighty forces, store up energy, seek high purposes, in order to struggle against obstacles in the midst of unfavorable natural conditions. In order that he may progress it is necessary that a revolutionary spirit, so to speak, should boil in his veins, since progress necessarily requires change; it implies the overthrow of the past, there deified, by the present; the victory of new ideas over the ancient and accepted ones. It will not be sufficient to speak to his fancy, to talk nicely to him, nor that the light illuminate him like the ignis fatuus that leads travelers astray at night; all the flattering promises of the fairest hopes will not suffice, so long as his spirit is not free, his intelligence not respected.

The reasons that originate in the lack of national sentiment are still more lamentable and more

transcendental.

Convinced by the insinuation of his inferiority, his spirit harassed by his education, if that brutalization of which we spoke above can be called education, in that exchange of usages and sentiments among different nations, the Filipino, to whom remain only his susceptibility and his poetical imagination, allows himself to be guided by his fancy and his self-love. It is sufficient that the foreigner praise to him the imported merchandise and run down the native product for him to hasten to make the change, without reflecting that everything has its weak side and the most sensible custom is ridiculous in the eyes of those who do not follow it. They have dazzled him with tinsel, with strings, of colored glass beads, with noisy rattles, shining mirrors and other trinkets, and he has given in return his gold, his conscience, and even his liberty. He changed his religion for the external practices of another cult; the convictions and usages derived from his climate and needs, for other usages and other convictions that developed under another sky and another inspiration. His spirit, well-disposed toward everything that looks good to him, was then transformed, at the pleasure of the nation that forced upon him its God and its laws, and as the

trader with whom he dealt did not bring a cargo of useful implements of iron, hoes to till the fields, but stamped papers, crucifixes, bulls and prayer-books; as he did not have for ideal and prototype the tanned and vigorous laborer, but the aristocratic lord, carried in a luxurious litter, the result was that the imitative people became bookish, devout, prayerful; it acquired ideas of luxury and ostentation, without thereby improving the means of its subsistence to a corresponding degree.

The lack of national sentiment brings another evil, moreover, which is the absence of all opposition to measures prejudicial to the people and the absence of any initiative in whatever may redound to its good. A man in the Philippines is only an individual, he is not a member of a nation. He is forbidden and denied the right of association, and is therefore weak and sluggish. The Philippines are an organism whose cells seem to have no arterial system to irrigate it or nervous system to communicate its impressions; these cells must, nevertheless, yield their product, get it where they can: if they perish, let them perish. In the view of some this is expedient so that a colony may be a colony; perhaps they are right, but not to the effect that a colony may flourish.

The result of this is that if a prejudicial measure is ordered, no one protests; all goes well apparently until later the evils are felt. Another blood-letting, and as the organism has neither nerves nor voice the physician proceeds in the belief that the treatment is not injuring it. It needs a reform, but as it must not speak, it keeps silent and remains with the need. The patient wants to eat, it wants to breathe the fresh air, but as such desires may offend the susceptibility of the physician who thinks that he has already provided everything necessary, it suffers and pines away from fear of receiving scolding, of getting another plaster and a new blood-letting, and so on indefinitely.

In addition to this, love of peace and the horror many have of accepting the few administrative positions which fall to the Filipinos on account of the trouble and annoyance these cause them places at the head of the people the most stupid and incapable men, those who submit to everything, those who can endure all the caprices and exactions of the curate and of the officials. With this inefficiency in the lower spheres of power and ignorance and indifference in the upper, with the frequent changes and the eternal apprenticeships, with great fear and many administrative obstacles, with a voiceless people that

has neither initiative nor cohesion, with employees who nearly all strive to amass a fortune and return home, with inhabit, ants who live in great hardship from the instant they begin to breathe, create prosperity, agriculture and industry, found enterprises and companies, things that still hardly prosper in free and well-organized communities.

Yes, all attempt is useless that does not spring from a profound study of the evil that afflicts us. To combat this indolence, some have proposed increasing the native's needs and raising the taxes. What has happened? Criminals have multiplied, penury has been aggravated. Why? Because the native already has enough needs with his functions of the Church, with his fiestas, with the public offices forced on him, the donations and bribes that he has to make so that he may drag out his wretched existence. The cord is already too taut.

We have heard many complaints, and every day we read in the papers about the efforts the government is making to rescue the country from its condition of indolence. Weighing its plans, its illusions and its difficulties, we are reminded of the gardener who tried to raise a tree planted in a small flower-pot. The gardener spent his days tending and watering the

handful of earth, he trimmed the plant frequently, he pulled at it to lengthen it and hasten its growth, he grafted on it cedars and oaks, until one day the little tree died, leaving the man convinced that it belonged to a degenerate species, attributing the failure of his experiment to everything except the lack of soil and his own ineffable folly.

Without education and liberty, that soil and that sun of mankind, no reform is possible, no measure can give the result desired. This does not mean that we should ask first for the native the instruction of a sage and all imaginable liberties, in order then to put a hoe in his hand or place him in a workshop; such a pretension would be an absurdity and vain folly. What we wish is that obstacles be not put in his way, that the many his climate and the situation of the islands afford be not augmented, that instruction be not begrudged him for fear that when he becomes intelligent he may separate from the colonizing nation or ask for the rights of which he makes himself worthy. Since some day or other he will become enlightened, whether the government wishes it or not, let his enlightenment be as a gift received and not as conquered plunder. We desire that the policy be at once frank and consistent, that is, highly

civilizing, without sordid reservations, without distrust, without fear or jealousy, wishing the good for the sake of the good, civilization for the sake of civilization, without ulterior thoughts of gratitude, or else boldly exploiting, tyrannical and selfish without hypocrisy or deception, with a whole system well-planned and studied out for dominating by compelling obedience, for commanding to get rich, for getting rich to be happy. If the former, the government may act with the security that some day or other it will reap the harvest and will find a people its own in heart and interest; there is nothing like a favor for securing the friendship or enmity of man, according to whether it be conferred with good will or hurled into his face and bestowed upon him in spite of himself. If the logical and regulated system of exploitation be chosen, stifling with the jingle of gold and the sheen of opulence the sentiments of independence in the colonies, paying with its wealth for its lack of liberty, as the English do in India, who moreover leave the government to native rulers, then build roads, lay out highways, foster the freedom of trade; let the government heed material interests more than the interests of four orders of friars; let it send out intelligent employees to foster industry; just judges, all well paid, so that they be not venal

pilferers, and lay aside all religious pretext. This policy has the advantage in that while it may not lull the instincts of liberty wholly to sleep, yet the day when the mother country loses her colonies she will at least have the gold amassed and not the regret of having reared ungrateful children.

1. Sancianco y Goson, Gregorio: El progreso de Filipinas. Estudios económicos, administrativos y políticos. Parte económica. Madrid, Imp. de la Vda. de J M. Perez, 1881 Pp XIV-260.

An eminent student of Philippine life and history, James A. LeRoy in his "The Philippines, 1860-1898 —Some comment and bibliographical notes" published in volume 52 of Blair and Robertson, Philippine Islands 1493-1898, praises this book (p. 141) as "especially valuable on administrative matters just prior to the revision of the fiscal regime in connection with the abolition of the government tobacco monopoly", and for its "data on land, commerce, and industry"

2. Before 1590, one of the Spanish officers in the Philippines, commenting on the climate of the

Islands, declared, with considerable acumen, that Europeans could stand life and work here if they observed continence in regard to the use of alcoholic beverages.

3. See Morga's "Report of conditions in the Philippines (June 8, 1598)" in Blair and Robertson vol. 10. pp. 75-80, in which various abuses of the friars are set forth. This should be compared with the following pages of the same relation (pp. 89-90) on secular affairs, from which it will be recognized that the condition was not so much the resultant of one class as of Spanish national character. Cf. also, Anda y Salazar B. and R, vol. 50, pp. 137-190; and Le Gentil, Voyage (Paris, 1779-81), vol. 1, pp. 183-191. It would be hardly fair not to call to mind that the Filipinos are debtors to the friars in many ways, and the Filipinos themselves should be the last to forget this. For a good exposition from the friar point of view, see Zamora, Las Corporaciones-Religiosas en Filipinas: Valladolid, 1901.

See also Mallat, Les Philippines (Paris, 1846), vol. 1, pp. 374-389.

4. The history of the Philippines is full of references to Chinese who came here for the reasons assigned

by Rizal. The antiquarian will be interested in consulting a small work entitled Notes on the Malay Archipelago and Malacca, compiled from Chinese sources, by W. P. Groeneveldt.

5 See B. and R., vol 34, pp. 183-191 for a description of the early Chinese trade in the Philippines, also translated by Hirth from Chinese sources, but evidently not the same as referred to by Rizal,

6. This citation is translated directly from the original Italian Ms. Rizal's account is seen to be slightly different and arises from the fact that he made use of Amoretti's printed version of the Ms., which is wrong in many particulars. Amoretti attempted to change the original Ms. into modern Italian, with disastrous result. It is to be regretted that Walls y Merino followed the same garbled text, in his Primer viaje alrededor del Mundo (Madrid, 1899).

Dr. Antonio de Morga's book is perhaps the most famous of all the early books treating of the Philippines. Its full title is as follows: "Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas: Dirigido á Don Cristoval Gomez de Sandoval y Rojas, Duque de Cea, Mexico, En casa de Geronymo Balli, 1609." The original edition is very rare, and is worth almost its weight in gold. The

manuscript circulated for some years before the date of publication.

The second Spanish edition of the work was published by Rizal himself, who was always a sincere admirer of the book. It bears the following title-page: "Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas por el Doctor Antonio de Morga. Obra publicada en Mejico el año de 1609 nuevamente sacada á luz y anotada por José Rizal y precedida de un prólogo del Prof. Fernando Blumentritt. Paris, Libreria de Garnier Hermanos, 1890." Shortly before Rizal began work on his edition, a Spanish scholar, Justo Zaragoza, began the publication of a new edition of Morga. The book was reprinted, but the notes, prologue, and life of Morga which Zargoza had intended to insert, were never completed because of that editor's death. Only two copies of this edition, so far as known, were ever bound, one of which belongs to the Ayer collection in Chicago, and the other by the Tabacalera purchase to the Philippine Library, in Manila. Still one other Spanish edition has appeared, namely: "Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas por el Dr. Antonio de Morga. Nueva edición enriquecida con los escritos inéditos del mismo autor ilustrada con numerosas notas que amplian el texto y prologada extensamente por W. E.

Retana, Madrid, Libreria General de Victoriano Suarez, Editor, 1909." Retana adds a life of Morga and numerous documents written by him. An English edition was published as follows: "The Philippine Islands, Moluccas, Siam, Cambodia, Japan, and China. at the close of the sixteenth century. By Antonio de Morga. Translated from the Spanish, with notes and a preface, and a letter from Luis Vaez de Torres, describing his voyage through the Torres Straits, by the Hen. Henry E. J. Stanley, London, Printed for the Hakluyt Society, 1868". However, Stanley's translation is poor, and parts of passages are not translated at all. [It was this edition then in preparation by the Hakluyt Society, which Sir John Bowring, a director of the society, mentioned on his visit to Rizal's uncle in Biñan, so that to make the book available to Spaniards and Filipinos became an ambition from childhood with Rizal.-C.] A second English translation appears in B. and R. vols. 15 and 16. A separate copy of this translation was also published in a very limited edition, with the title: "History of the Philippine Islands from their discovery by Magellan in 1521 to the beginning of the XVII century; with descriptions of Japan, China and adjacent countries, by Dr. Antonio de Morga, alcalde of criminal causes, in the Royal Audiencia of

Nueva España, and counsel for the Holy Office of the inquisition. Completely translated into English, edited and annotated by E. H. Blair and J. A. Robertson. Cleveland, Ohio, The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1907." See B. and R. vols. 9-12 for other documents by Morga, and vol. 53 (or Robertson's Bibliography of the Philippine Islands, Cleveland, 1908), for bibliographical details regarding Morga and titles to documents. Perhaps the most famous of all his writings outside of his book is his relation mentioned ante, note 3.

7. Published at London in 1783. See p. 346.

8. See B. and R., vol. 4, pp. 221, 222, for an old boatsong.

9. Colin's Labor evangelica, published in Madrid, 1663; a new edition, in three volumes, and greatly enriched by notes and was published by Pablo Pastells, S. J. (Barcelona, 1900-1902).

10. See B. and R., vol. 33, pp. 233-235. The original says the ransom included 150 chickens; hence 450, an error due again to Amoretti.

11, Conquistas do las Islas Fillpinas (Madrid, 1698). There is no doubt of the frequency of inter-island trade among the peoples of the Philippines at an early

period. Trade was stimulated by the very fact that the Malay peoples, except those who have been driven into the mountainous interiors, are by their very nature a seafaring people. The fact of an inter-island traffic is indicative of a culture above that possessed by a people in the barbarian stage of culture. Of course, there was considerable Chinese trade as well throughout the islands.

12. This estimate is somewhat high. A writer in speaking of the population of Manila, the metropolis of the Philippines then as now, about 1570 says that its population scarcely reached 80,000, instead of the 200,000 reported.

13 Licentiate Pedro de Rojas, of the Manila Audiencia, in a letter to Felipe II, June 30, 1586—Vol.6, pp. 265-274 says (p. 270): "If there were no trade with China, the citizens of these islands, would be richer; for the natives if they had not so many tostons, would pay their tributes in the articles which they produce, and which are current, that is, cloths, lampotes, cotton, and gold.—all of which have great value in Nueva España. These they cease to produce because of the abundance of silver; and what is worse and entails more loss upon your Majesty, is that they do not, as formerly, work the mines and take out

gold". The old records contains numerous references to the decline of the native industries of the Philippines after the arrival of the Spaniards and the increase of Chinese trade.

14. See ante, note 13.

15. The decrease of population among native people in the Philippines after the arrival of the Spaniards compares in no degree with what occurred in America. A most distressing picture of conditions in the Philippines is given by Bishop Domingo de Salazar in his relation written about 1583 (see B. & R., vol 5, pp. 210-255. See especially p. 212.) It is well to balance Salazar's account with those of others

(A "tributary" was generally reckoned as five persons, one "tribute" being required for each adult male. Hence "tributaries" and "families" may here be taken to mean about the same number,—D.)

16. The forced labor required by the Spaniards in shipbuilding formed one of the legitimate causes of complaint among the people almost from the beginning.

17. See ante, note 15, also note 16.

18. The early friars, although many of them fell into some of the very faults which they condemned, inveighed boldly against the cruelty of the Spaniards. Doubtless their attitude did encourage their converts to withdraw from industry to a certain degree.

19. See B. & R, vol. 4, pp. 148-303.

20 See B & R., vol. 6, for early accounts of Chinese trade and Spanish measures affecting it The hostility between Spaniards and Portuguese enters largely into the question. The effects of the deplorably bad economics of Spain in its trade relations are still felt in the Peninsula.

21. See ante, note 20.

22. See ante, note 20. The arrival and departure of the annual galleon were times of activity, but otherwise Manila was a dull town, with little industry. The Chinese usurped all the petty trade.

23 It is to the credit, of the Sociedad Económica de Amigos del Pais de Filipinas, founded by the energetic governor Basco y Vargas in 1781, that it extended its many-sided interests to the destruction of the devastating hordes of locusts that visit the Philippines so frequently.

24 The Spanish policy remained to the end one of exclusion, and the privileges granted were almost all because of coercion, and the penetrating force of modern ideas.

25. A loose use of the word "monk", which is properly used of a cloistered ecclesiastic who does not leave his convent. "Friar" would be a more exact term. The Benedictines are monks; the Augustinians, Dominicans, Franciscans, and Recollects, are friars.

26. This was the Filipino chemist Anacleto del Rosario, whom Rizal rightly praises.

27. This refers doubtless to Rizal himself, who competed in an open contest for Spaniards and Indians, of the Liceo Artistico-Literario de Manila, and of whom such an occurrence is related. He was awarded first prose prize for a production entitled "El Consejo de los Dioses", which see in the "Revista del Liceo Artistico-Literario de Manila, No. 4, 1880, pd. 45. This production, which bears neither signature nor sign of authorship, is dated April 13, 1880.

An Eagle Flight

A Filipino Novel

Adapted from

“Noli Me Tangere”

By
Dr. José Rizal

New York
McClure, Phillips & Co.
MCMI

[5]

[Contents]

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[Contents]

Contents.

1. ChapterPage
2. I.—The House on the Pasig1
3. II.—Crisóstomo Ibarra7
4. III.—The Dinner9
5. IV.—Heretic and Filibuster12
6. V.—A Star in the Dark Night15
7. VI.—Captain Tiago and Maria17
8. VII.—Idylle20
9. VIII.—Reminiscences23
10. IX.—Affairs of the Country25
11. X.—The Pueblo30
12. XI.—The Sovereigns32
13. XII.—All Saints' Day35
14. XIII.—The Little Sacristans40
15. XIV.—Sisa44
16. XV.—Basilio47
17. XVI.—At the Manse50
18. XVII.—Story of a Schoolmaster53
19. XVIII.—The Story of a Mother57
20. XIX.—The Fishing Party63
21. XX.—In the Woods71
22. XXI.—With the Philosopher79
23. XXII.—The Meeting at the Town Hall87
24. XXIII.—The Eve of the Féte94
25. XXIV.—In the Church102
26. XXV.—The Sermon105
27. XXVI.—The Crane109

28. XXVII.—Free Thought116

29. XXVIII.—The Banquet119

30. XXIX.—Opinions126

31. XXX.—The First Cloud130

32. XXXI.—His Excellency134

33. XXXII.—The Procession142

34. XXXIII.—Doña Consolacion145[7]

35. XXXIV.—Right and Might150

36. XXXV.—Husband and Wife156

37. XXXVI.—Projects163

38. XXXVII.—Scrutiny and Conscience165

39. XXXVIII.—The Two Women170

40. XXXIX.—The Outlawed176

41. XL.—The Enigma181

42. XLI.—The Voice of the Persecuted183

43. XLII.—The Family of Elias187

44. XLIII.—Il Buon di si Conosce da Mattina193

45. XLIV.—La Gallera196

46. XLV.—A Call201

47. XLVI.—A Conspiracy204

48. XLVII.—The Catastrophe208

49. XLVIII.—Gossip212

50. XLIX.—Væ Victis217

51. L.—Accurst221

52. LI.—Patriotism and Interest224

53. LII.—Marie Clara Marries232

54. LIII.—The Chase on the Lake242

55. LIV.—Father Dámaso Explains Himself247

56. LV.—The Nochebuena251

[8]
[Contents]

Introduction

José Rizal

In that horrible drama, the Philippine revolution, one man of the purest and noblest character stands out pre-eminently—José Rizal—poet, artist, philologue, novelist, above all, patriot; his influence might have changed the whole course of events in the islands, had not a blind and stupid policy brought about the crime of his death.

This man, of almost pure Tagalo race, was born in 1861, at Calamba, in the island of Luzon, on the southern shore of the Laguna de Bay, where he grew up in his father's home, under the tutorage of a wise and learned native priest, Leontio.

The child's fine nature, expanding in the troublous latter days of a long race bondage, was touched early with the fire of genuine patriotism. He was eleven when the tragic consequences of the Cavité insurrection destroyed any lingering illusions of his people, and stirred in them a spirit that has not yet been allayed.

The rising at Cavité, like many others in the islands, was a protest against the holding of benefices by friars—a thing forbidden by a decree of the Council of Trent, but authorized in the Philippines, by papal bulls, until such time as there should be a sufficiency of native priests. This time never came. As the friars held the best agricultural lands, and had a voice—and that the most authoritative—in civil affairs, there developed in the rural districts a veritable feudal system, bringing in its train the arrogance and [9]tyranny that like conditions develop. It became impossible for the civil authorities to carry out measures in opposition to the friars. "The Government is an arm, the head is the convent," says the old philosopher of Rizal's story.

The rising at Cavité miscarried, and vengeance fell. Dr. Joseph Burgos, a saintly old priest, was put to death, and three other native priests with him, while many prominent native families were banished. Never had the better class of Filipinos been so outraged and aroused, and from this time on their purpose was fixed, not to free themselves from Spain, not to secede from the church they loved, but to agitate ceaselessly for reforms which none of

them longer believed could be realized without the expulsion of the friars. In the school of this purpose, and with the belief on the part of his father and Leontio that he was destined to use his life and talents in its behalf, José was trained, until he left his home to study in Manila. At the College of the Jesuits he carried off all the honors, with special distinction in literary work. He wrote a number of odes; and a melodrama in verse, the work of his thirteenth year, was successfully played at Manila. But he had to wear his honors as an Indian among white men, and they made life hard for him. He specially aroused the dislike of his Spanish college mates by an ode in which he spoke of his patria. A Tagalo had no native land, they contended —only a country.

At twenty Rizal finished his course at Manila, and a few months later went to Madrid, where he speedily won the degrees of Ph.D. and M.D.; then to Germany—taking here another degree, doing his work in the new language, which he mastered as he went along; to Austria, where he gained great skill as an oculist; to France, Italy, England—absorbing the languages and literature of these countries, doing some fine sculpture by way of diversion. But in all this he was single-minded; he never lost the voice of his call; he felt more and more keenly the contrast between the hard lot of his country and the freedom of these lands, and [10]he bore it ill that no one of them even knew about her, and the cancer eating away her beauty and strength. At the end of this period of study he settled in Berlin, and began his active work for his country.

Four years of the socialism and license of the universities had not distorted Rizal's political vision; he remained, as he had grown up, an opportunist. Not then, nor at any time, did he think his country ready for self-government. He saw as her best present good her continued union to Spain, "through a stable policy based upon justice and community of interests." He asked only for the reforms promised again and again by the ministry, and as often frustrated. To plead for the lifting of the hand of oppression from the necks of his people, he now wrote his first novel, "Noli Me Tangere."

The next year he returned to the Philippines to find himself the idol of the natives and a thorn in the flesh of friars and greedy officials. The reading of his book was proscribed. He stayed long enough to concern himself in a dispute of his townspeople with the Dominicans over titles to lands; then finding his efforts vain and his safety doubtful, he left for Japan. Here he

pursued for some time his usual studies; came thence to America, and then crossed to England, where he made researches in the British Museum, and edited in Spanish, “Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas,” by Dr. Antonio de Morga, an important work, neglected by the Spaniards, but already edited in English by Dean Stanley.

After publishing this work, in Paris, Rizal returned to Spain, where, in 1890, he began a series of brilliant pleas for the Philippines, in the *Solidaridad*, a liberal journal published at Barcelona and afterward at Madrid. But he roused little sympathy or interest in Spain, and his articles, repeated in pamphlets in the Philippines, served to make his position more dangerous at home.

Disheartened but steadfast, he retired to Belgium, to write his second novel, “El Filibusterismo.” “Noli Me [11]Tangere” is a poet’s story of his people’s loves, faults, aspirations, and wrongs; “El Filibusterismo” is the work of a student of statecraft, pointing out the way to political justice and the development of national life. Inspired, it would seem, by his own creation of a future for his country, he returned to the *Solidaridad*, where, in a series of remarkable articles, he forecast the ultimate downfall of Spain in the Philippines and the rise of his people. This was his crime against the Government: for the spirit which in a Spanish boy would not permit a Tagalo to have a patria, in a Spaniard grown could not brook the suggestion of colonial independence, even in the far future.

And now having poured out these passionate pleas and splendid forecasts, Rizal was homesick for this land of his. He went to Hong-Kong. Calamba was in revolt. His many friends at the English port did everything to keep him; but the call was too persistent. December 23d, 1891, he wrote to Despujols, then governor-general of the Philippines: “If Your Excellency thinks my slight services could be of use in pointing out the evils of my country and helping heal the wounds reopened by the recent injustices, you need but to say so, and trusting in your honor as a gentleman, I will immediately put myself at your disposal. If you decline my offer, ... I shall at least be conscious of having done all in my power, while seeking the good of my country, to preserve her union to Spain through a stable policy based upon justice and community of interests.”

The governor expressed his gratitude, promised protection, and Rizal sailed for Manila. But immediately after his landing he was arrested on a charge of sedition, whose source made the governor's promise impotent. Nothing could be proved against Rizal; but it was not the purpose of his enemies to have him acquitted. A half-way sentence was imposed, and he was banished to Dapidan, on the island of Mindanao. Despujols was recalled to Spain.

In this exile Rizal spent four years, beloved by the natives, [12]teaching them agriculture, treating their sick (the poor without charge), improving their schools, and visited from time to time by patients from abroad, drawn here by his fame as an oculist. Among these last came a Mr. Taufer, a resident of Hong-Kong, and with him his foster-child, Josephine Bracken, the daughter of an Irish sergeant. The pretty and adventurous girl and the banished patriot fell in love with each other.

These may well have been among the happiest years of Rizal's life. He had always been an exile in fact: now that he was one in name, strangely enough he was able for the first time to live in peace among his brothers under the skies he loved. He sang, in his pathetic content:

> "Thou dear illusion with thy soothing cup!
> I taste, and think I am a child again.
> Oh! kindly tempest, favoring winds of heaven,
> That knew the hour to check my shifting flight,
> And beat me down upon my native soil,..."

Always about his philological studies, he began here a work that should be of peculiar interest to us: a treatise on Tagalog verbs, in the English language. Did his knowledge of America's growing feeling toward Cuba lead him to foresee—as no one else seems to have done—her appearance in the Philippines, or was he thinking of England?

At Hong-Kong, and in his brief stays at Manila, Rizal had established the Liga Filipina, a society of educated and progressive islanders, whose ideas of needed reforms and methods of attaining them were at one with his own. His banishment was a warning of danger and checked the society's activity.

The Liga was succeeded, in the sense only of followed, by the Katipunan,—a native word also meaning league. The makers of this "league," though avowing the same [13]purpose as the members of the other, were men of very different stamp. Their initiation was a blood-rite: they sought

immediate independence; they preached a campaign of force, if not of violence. That a recent reviewer should have connected Dr. Rizal's name with the Katipunan is difficult to understand. Not alone are his writings, acts, and character against such a possibility, but so also is the testimony of the Spanish archives: for not only was it admitted at his final trial that he was not suspected of any connection with the Katipunan, but his well-known disapproval of that society's premature and violent action was even made a point against him. He was so much the more dangerous to the state because he had the sagacity to know that the times were not yet ripe for independence, and the honesty and purity of purpose to make only demands which the state herself well knew to be just.

When the rebellion of 1896 broke out, Rizal, still at Dapidan, knew that his life would not long be worth a breath of his beloved Philippine air. He asked, therefore, of the Government permission to go to Cuba as an army surgeon. It was granted, and he was taken to Manila—ovations all along his route—and embarked on the *Isla de Panay* for Barcelona. He carried with him the following letter from General Blanco, then governor-general of the Philippines, to the Minister of War at Madrid:

MANILA, August 30th, 1896.

ESTEEMED GENERAL AND DISTINGUISHED FRIEND:

I recommend to you with genuine interest, Dr. José Rizal, who is leaving for the Peninsula, to place himself at the disposal of the Government as volunteer army surgeon to Cuba. During the four years of his exile at Dapidan, he has conducted himself in the most exemplary manner, and he is in my opinion the more worthy of pardon and consideration, in that he is in no way connected with the extravagant attempts we are now deploring, neither those of conspirators nor of the secret societies that have been formed.[14]

I have the pleasure to reassure you of my high esteem, and remain,

Your affectionate friend and comrade,

RAMON BLANCO.

But as soon as the *Isla* was on the seas, despatches began to pass between Manila and Madrid, and before she reached her port the promises, acceptances, and recommendations of the Government officials were void. Upon landing, Rizal was immediately arrested and confined in the infamous Montjuich prison. Despujols was now military governor of Barcelona. The interview of hours which he is said to have had with his Filipino prisoner must have been dramatic. Rizal was at once re-embarked, on the *Colon,* and

returned to Manila, a state prisoner. Blanco was recalled, and Poliavieja, a sworn friend of the clericals, was sent out.

Rizal was tried by court-martial, on a charge of sedition and rebellion. His guilt was manifestly impossible. Except as a prisoner of the state, he had spent only a few weeks in the Philippines since his boyhood. His life abroad had been perfectly open, as were all his writings. The facts stated in General Blanco's letter to the Minister of War were well known to all Rizal's accusers. The best they could do was to aver that he had written "depreciative words" against the Government and the Church. Some testimony was given against him by men who, since the American occupation, have made affidavit that it was false and forced from them by torture. Rizal made a splendid defence, but he was condemned, and sentenced to the death of a traitor. On that day José Rizal y Mercado and Josephine Bracken were married. Then the sweetness and strength of his character and his singleness of purpose made a beautiful showing. In the night, which his bride spent on her knees outside his prison, he wrote a long poem of farewell to his patria adorado, fine in its abnegation and exquisite in the wanderings of its fancy. He received the [15]ministrations of a Jesuit priest. He was perfectly calm. "What is death to me?" he said; "I have sown, others are left to reap." At dawn he was shot.

The poem in which he left a record of his last thoughts was the following:

My Last Thought.

Land I adore, farewell! thou land of the southern sun's choosing!
Pearl of the Orient seas! our forfeited Garden of Eden!
Joyous I yield up for thee my sad life, and were it far brighter,
Young, rose-strewn, for thee and thy happiness still would I give it.
Far afield, in the din and rush of maddening battle,
Others have laid down their lives, nor wavered nor paused in the giving.

What matters way or place—the cyprus, the lily, the laurel,
Gibbet or open field, the sword or inglorious torture,
When ’tis the hearth and the country that call for the life’s immolation?
Dawn’s faint lights bar the east, she smiles through the cowl of the darkness,
Just as I die. Hast thou need of purple to garnish her pathway?
Here is my blood, on the hour! pour it out, and the sun in his rising
Mayhap will touch it with gold, will lend it the sheen of his glory.
Dreams of my childhood and youth, and dreams of my strong young manhood,
What were they all but to see, thou gem of the Orient ocean!
Tearless thine eyes so deep, unbent, unmarred thy sweet forehead.
Vision I followed from far, desire that spurred on and consumed me!
Greeting! my parting soul cries, and greeting again!... O my country!
Beautiful is it to fall, that the vision may rise to fulfilment,
Giving my life for thy life, and breathing thine air in the death-throe;
Sweet to eternally sleep in thy lap, O land of enchantment!
If in the deep, rich grass that covers my rest in thy bosom,
Some day thou seest upspring a lowly, tremulous blossom,
Lay there thy lips, ’tis my soul; may I feel on my forehead descending,
Deep in the chilly tomb, the soft, warm breath of thy kisses.[16]

Let the calm light of the moon fall around me, and dawn's fleeting splendor;
Let the winds murmur and sigh, on my cross let some bird tell its message;
Loosed from the rain by the brazen sun, let clouds of soft vapor
Bear to the skies, as they mount again, the chant of my spirit.
There may some friendly heart lament my parting untimely,
And if at eventide a soul for my tranquil sleep prayeth,
Pray thou too, O my fatherland! for my peaceful reposing.
Pray for those who go down to death through unspeakable torments;
Pray for those who remain to suffer such torture in prisons;
Pray for the bitter grief of our mothers, our widows, our orphans;
Oh, pray too for thyself, on the way to thy final redemption.
When our still dwelling-place wraps night's dusky mantle about her,
Leaving the dead alone with the dead, to watch till the morning,
Break not our rest, and seek not to lay death's mystery open.
If now and then thou shouldst hear the string of a lute or a zithern,
Mine is the hand, dear country, and mine is the voice that is singing.
When my tomb, that all have forgot, no cross nor stone marketh,
There let the laborer guide his plough, there cleave the earth open.
So shall my ashes at last be one with thy hills and thy valleys.

> Little 'twill matter then, my country, that thou shouldst forget me!
> I shall be air in thy streets, and I shall be space in thy meadows.
> I shall be vibrant speech in thine ears, shall be fragrance and color,
> Light and shout, and loved song forever repeating my message.

Rizal's own explanation of the lofty purpose of his searching story of his Tagalog fatherland was in these words of his dedicatory preface:

To My Country

The records of human suffering make known to us the existence of ailments of such nature that the slightest touch irritates and causes tormenting pains. Whenever, in the midst of modern civilizations, I have tried to call up thy dear image, O my country! either for the comradeship of remembrance or to compare thy life with that about me, I have seen thy fair face disfigured and distorted by a hideous social cancer.[17]
Eager for thy health, which is our happiness, and seeking the best remedy for thy pain, I am about to do with thee what the ancients did with their sick: they exposed them on the steps of their temples, that every one who came to adore the divinity within might offer a remedy.

So I shall strive to describe faithfully thy state without extenuation; to lift a corner of the covering that hides thy sore; sacrificing everything to truth, even the love of thy glory, while loving, as thy son, even thy frailties and sins.

JOSÉ RIZAL.

[18]

[Contents]

An Eagle Flight

I.
The House on the Pasig.

It was toward the end of October. Don Santiago de los Santos, better known as Captain Tiago, was giving a dinner; and though, contrary to custom, he had not announced it until that very afternoon, it had become before evening the sole topic of conversation, not only at Binondo, but in the other suburbs of Manila, and even in the city itself. Captain Tiago passed for the most lavish of entertainers, and it was well known that the doors of his home, like those of his country, were closed to nobody and nothing save commerce and all new or audacious ideas. The news spread, therefore, with lightning rapidity in the world of the sycophants, the unemployed and idle, whom heaven has multiplied so generously at Manila.

The dinner was given in a house of the Calle de Anloague, which may yet be recognized, if an earthquake has not demolished it. This house, rather large and of a style common to the country, stood near an arm of the Pasig, called the Boco de Binondo, a rio which, like all others of Manila, washing along the multiple output of baths, sewers, and fishing grounds serves as a means of transport, and even furnishes drinking-water, if such be the humor of the Chinese carrier. Scarcely at intervals of a half-mile is [19]this powerful artery of the quarter where the traffic is most important, the movement most active, dotted with bridges; and these, in ruins at one end six months of the year and inapproachable the remaining six at the other, give horses a pretext for plunging into the water, to the great surprise of preoccupied mortals in carriages dozing tranquilly or philosophizing on the progress of the century.

The house of Captain Tiago was rather low and on lines sufficiently incorrect. A grand staircase with green balustrades, carpeted at intervals, led from the vestibule, with its squares of colored faience, to the main floor, between Chinese pedestals ornamented with fantastic designs, supporting vases and jardinières of flowers.

At the top of the staircase was a large apartment, called here *caida*, which for this night served at once as dining- and music-room. In the centre, a

long table, luxuriously set, seemed to promise to diners-out the most soothing satisfaction, at the same time threatening the timid girl—the dalaga—who for six mortal hours must submit to the companionship of strange and diverse people.

In contrast to these mundane preparations, richly colored pictures of religious subjects hung about the walls, and at the end of the apartment, imprisoned in ornate and splendid Renaissance carving, was a curious canvas of vast dimensions, bearing the inscription, "Our Lady of Peace and of Safe Journeys, Venerated at Antipolo." The ceiling was prettily decorated with jewelled Chinese lamps, cages without birds, spheres of crystal faced with colored foil, faded air plants, *botetes*, etc. On the river side, through fantastic arches, half Chinese, half European, were glimpses of a terrace, with trellises and arbors, illuminated by little colored lanterns. Brilliant chandeliers, reflected in great mirrors, lighted the apartment. On a platform of pine was a superb grand piano. In a panel of the wall, a large portrait in oil [20]represented a man of agreeable face, in frock coat, robust, straight, symmetrical as the gavel between his jewelled fingers.

The crowd of guests almost filled the room; the men separated from the women, as in Catholic churches and synagogues. An old cousin of Captain Tiago's was receiving alone. Her appearance was kindly, but her tongue not very flexible to the Castilian. She filled her rôle by offering to the Spaniards trays of cigarettes and *buyos*, and giving the Filipinos her hand to kiss. The poor old lady, wearied at last, profited by the sound of breaking china to go out hurriedly, grumbling at maladroits. She did not reappear.

Whether the pictures roused a spirit of devotion, whether the women of the Philippines are exceptional, the feminine part of the assembly remained silent. Scarcely was heard even a yawn, stifled behind a fan. The men made more stir. The most interesting and animated group was formed by two monks, two Spanish provincials, and an officer, seated round a little table, on which were wine and English biscuits.

The officer, an old lieutenant, tall and morose, looked a Duke of Alba, retired into the Municipal Guard. He spoke little and dryly. One of the monks was a young Dominican, handsome, brilliant, precociously grave; it was the curate of Binondo. Consummate dialectician, he could escape from

a *distinguo* like an eel from a fisherman's nets. He spoke seldom, and seemed to weigh his words.

The other monk talked much and gestured more. Though his hair was turning gray, he seemed to have preserved all his vigor. His carriage, his glance, his large jaws, his herculean frame, gave him the air of a Roman patrician in disguise. Yet he seemed genial, and if the timbre of his voice was autocratic, his frank and merry laugh removed [21]any disagreeable impression, so far even that one pardoned his appearing in the salon with unshod feet.

One of the provincials, a little man with a black beard, had nothing remarkable about him but his nose, which, to judge from its size, ought not to have belonged to him entire. The other, young and blond, seemed newly arrived in the country. The Franciscan was conversing with him somewhat warmly.

"You will see," said he, "when you have been here several months; you will be convinced that to legislate at Madrid and to execute in the Philippines is not one and the same thing."

"But——"

"I, for example," continued Brother Dámaso, raising his voice to cut off the words of his objector, "I, who count twenty-three years of plane and palm, can speak with authority. I spent twenty years in one pueblo. In twenty years one gets acquainted with a town. San Diego had six thousand souls. I knew each inhabitant as if I'd borne and reared him—with which foot this one limped, how that one's pot boiled—and I tell you the reforms proposed by the Ministers are absurd. The Indian is too indolent!"

"Ah, pardon me," said the young man, speaking low and drawing nearer; "that word rouses all my interest. Does it really exist from birth, this indolence of the native, or is it, as some travellers say, only an excuse of our own for the lack of advancement in our colonial policy?"

"Bah! ask Señor Laruja, who also knows the country well; ask him if the ignorance and idleness of the Indians are not unparalleled?"

"In truth!" the little dark man made haste to affirm; "nowhere will you find men more careless."

“Nor more corrupt, nor more ungrateful.”

“Nor more ill-bred.”[22]
The young man looked about uneasily. “Gentlemen,” said he, still speaking low, “it seems to me we are the guests of Indians, and that these young ladies——”

“Bah, you are too timid: Santiago does not consider himself an Indian, besides, he isn’t here. These are the scruples of a newcomer. Wait a little. When you have slept in our strapped beds, eaten the tinola, and seen our balls and fêtes, you’ll change your tone. And more, you will find that the country is going to ruin; she is ruined already!”

“What does your reverence mean?” cried the lieutenant and Dominican together.

“The evil all comes from the fact that the Government sustains wrong-doers in the face of the ministers of God,” continued the Franciscan, raising his voice and facing about. “When a curate rids his cemetery of a malefactor, no one, not even the king, has the right to interfere; and a wretched general, a petty general from nowhere——”

“Father, His Excellency is viceroy,” said the officer, rising. “His Excellency represents His Majesty the king.”

“What Excellency?” retorted the Franciscan, rising in turn. “Who is this king? For us there is but one King, the legitimate——”

“If you do not retract that, Father, I shall make it known to the governor-general,” cried the lieutenant.

“Go to him now, go!” retorted Father Dámaso; “I’ll loan you my carriage.”

The Dominican interposed.

“Señores,” said he in a tone of authority, “you should not confuse things, nor seek offence where there is none intended. We must distinguish in the words of Father Dámaso those of the man from those of the priest. The latter per se can never offend, because they are infallible. In the words of the man, a sub-distinction must be made, [23]into those said ab irato, those said ex ore, but not in corde, and those said in corde. It is these last only that

can offend, and even then everything depends. If they were not premeditated in mente, but simply arose per accidens in the heat of the conversation——”

At this interesting point there joined the group an old Spaniard, gentle and inoffensive of aspect. He was lame, and leaned on the arm of an old native woman, smothered in curls and frizzes, preposterously powdered, and in European dress. With relief every one turned to salute them. It was Doctor de Espadaña and his wife, the Doctora Doña Victorina. The atmosphere cleared.

“Which, Señor Laruja, is the master of the house?” asked the young provincial. “I haven’t been presented.”

“They say he has gone out.”

“No presentations are necessary here,” said Brother Dámaso; “Santiago is a good fellow.”

Er hat das Pulfer nicht erfunden. “He didn’t invent gunpowder,” added Laruja.

“What, you too, Señor de Laruja?” said Doña Victorina over her fan. “How could the poor man have invented gunpowder when, if what they say is true, the Chinese made it centuries ago?”

“The Chinese? ’Twas a Franciscan who invented it,” said Brother Dámaso.

“A Franciscan, no doubt; he must have been a missionary to China,” said the Señora, not disposed to abandon her idea.

“Who is this with Santiago?” asked the lieutenant. Every one looked toward the door, where two men had just entered. They came up to the group around the table.[24]

[Contents]

II.
Crisóstomo Ibarra.

One was the original of the portrait in oil, and he led by the hand a young man in deep black. “Good evening, señores; good evening, fathers,” said Captain Tiago, kissing the hands of the priests, “I have the honor of presenting to you Don Crisóstomo Ibarra.”

At the name of Ibarra there were smothered exclamations. The lieutenant, forgetting to salute the master of the house, surveyed the young man from head to foot. Brother Dámaso seemed petrified. The arrival was evidently unexpected. Señor Ibarra exchanged the usual phrases with members of the group. Nothing marked him from other guests save his black attire. His fine height, his manner, his movements, denoted sane and vigorous youth. His face, frank and engaging, of a rich brown, and lightly furrowed—trace of Spanish blood—was rosy from a sojourn in the north.

“Ah!” he cried, surprised and delighted, “my father’s old friend, Brother Dámaso!”

All eyes turned toward the Franciscan, who did not stir.

“Pardon,” said Ibarra, puzzled. “I am mistaken.”

“You are not mistaken,” said the priest at last, in an odd voice; “but your father was not my friend.”

Ibarra, astonished, drew slowly back the hand he had offered, and turned to find himself facing the lieutenant, whose eyes had never left him.

“Young man, are you the son of Don Rafael Ibarra?”

Crisóstomo bowed.[25]
“Then welcome to your country! I knew your father well, one of the most honorable men of the Philippines.”

“Señor,” replied Ibarra, “what you say dispels my doubts as to his fate, of which as yet I know nothing.”

The old man’s eyes filled with tears. He turned away to hide them, and moved off into the crowd.

The master of the house had disappeared. Ibarra was left alone in the middle of the room. No one presented him to the ladies. He hesitated a moment, then went up to them and said:

“Permit me to forget formalities, and salute the first of my countrywomen I have seen for years.”

No one spoke, though many eyes regarded him with interest. Ibarra turned away, and a jovial man, in native dress, with studs of brilliants down his shirt-front, almost ran up to say:

“Señor Ibarra, I wish to know you. I am Captain Tinong, and live near you at Tondo. Will you honor us at dinner to-morrow?”

“Thank you,” said Ibarra, pleased with the kindness, “but to-morrow I must leave for San Diego.”

“What a pity! Well then, on your return——”

“Dinner is served,” announced a waiter of the Café La Campana.

The guests began to move toward the table, not without much ceremony on the part of the ladies, especially the natives, who required a great deal of polite urging.[26]
[Contents]

III.

The Dinner.

The two monks finding themselves near the head of the table, like two candidates for a vacant office, began politely resigning in each other's favor.

"This is your place, Brother Dámaso."

"No, yours, Brother Sibyla."

"You are so much the older friend of the family."

"But you are the curate of the quarter."

This polite contention settled, the guests sat down, no one but Ibarra seeming to think of the master of the house.

"What," said he, "you're not to be with us, Don Santiago?"

But there was no place: Lucullus was not dining with Lucullus.

"Don't trouble yourself," said Captain Tiago, laying his hand on the young man's shoulder. "This feast is a thank-offering for your safe return. Ho, there! bring the tinola! I've ordered the tinola expressly for you, Crisóstomo."

"When did you leave the country?" Laruja asked Ibarra.

"Seven years ago."

"Then you must have almost forgotten it."

"On the contrary, it has been always in my thoughts; but my country seems to have forgotten me."

"Why do you say that?" asked the old lieutenant.

"Because for several months I have had no news, so that I do not even know how and when my father died."

The lieutenant could not repress a groan.[27]
"And where were you that they couldn't telegraph you?" asked Doña Victorina. "When we were married, we sent despatches to the peninsula."

“Señora, I was in the far north,” said Ibarra.

“You have travelled much,” said the blond provincial; “which of the European countries pleased you most?”

“After Spain, my second country, the nations that are free.”

“And what struck you as most interesting, most surprising, in the general life of nations—the genius of each, so to put it?” asked Laruja.

Ibarra reflected.

“Before visiting a country I carefully studied its history, and, except the different motives for national pride, there seems to me nothing surprisingly characteristic in any nation. Given its history, everything appears natural; each people’s wealth and misery seem in direct proportion to its freedom and its prejudices, and in consequence, in proportion to the self-sacrifice or selfishness of its progenitors.”

“Did you discover nothing more startling than that?” demanded the Franciscan, with a mocking laugh. “It was hardly worth while squandering money for so slight returns. Not a schoolboy but knows as much.”

The guests eyed one another, fearful of what might follow. Ibarra, astonished, remained silent a moment, then said quietly:

“Señores, do not wonder at these words of Brother Dámaso. He was my curate when I was a little boy, and with his reverence the years don’t count. I thank him for thus recalling the time when he was often an honored guest at my father’s table.”

Brother Sibyla furtively observed the Franciscan, who was trembling slightly. At the first possible opportunity Ibarra rose.[28]
“You will pardon me if I excuse myself,” he said. “I arrived only a few hours ago, and have matters of importance to attend to. The dinner is over. I drink little wine, and scarcely taste liquors.” And raising a glass as yet untouched, “Señores,” he said, “Spain and the Philippines forever!”

“You’re not going!” said Santiago in amazement. “Maria Clara and her friends will be with us in a moment. What shall I say to her?”

“That I was obliged to go,” said Ibarra, “and that I’m coming early in the morning.” And he went out.

The Franciscan unburdened himself.

“You saw his arrogance,” he said to the blond provincial. “These young fellows won’t take reproof from a priest. That comes of sending them to Europe. The Government ought to prohibit it.”

That night the young provincial added to his “Colonial Studies,” this paragraph: “In the Philippines, the least important person at a feast is he who gives it. You begin by showing your host to the door, and all goes merrily.... In the present state of affairs, it would be almost a kindness to prohibit young Filipinos from leaving their country, if not even from learning to read.”[29]

[Contents]

IV.
Heretic and Filibuster.

Ibarra stood outside the house of Captain Tiago. The night wind, which at this season brings a bit of freshness to Manila, seemed to blow away the cloud that had darkened his face. Carriages passed him like streaks of light, hired calashes rolled slowly by, and foot-passengers of all nationalities jostled one another. With the rambling gait of the preoccupied or the idle, he took his way toward the Plaza de Binondo. Nothing was changed. It was the same street, with the same blue and white houses, the same white walls with their slate-colored fresco, poor imitations of granite. The church tower showed the same clock with transparent face. The Chinese shop had the same soiled curtains, the same iron triangles. One day, long ago, imitating the street urchins of Manila, he had twisted one of these triangles: nobody had ever straightened it. "How little progress!" he murmured; and he followed the Calle de la Sacristia, pursued by the cry of sherbet venders.

"Marvellous!" he thought; "one would say my voyage was a dream. Santo Dios! the street is as bad as when I went away."

While he contemplated this marvel of urban stability in an unstable country, a hand fell lightly on his shoulder. He looked up and recognized the old lieutenant. His face had put off its expression of sternness, and he smiled kindly at Crisóstomo.[30]
"Young man," he said, "I was your father's friend: I wish you to consider me yours."

"You seem to have known my father well," said Crisóstomo; "perhaps you can tell me something of his death."

"You do not know about it?"

"Nothing at all, and Don Santiago would not talk with me till to-morrow."

"You know, of course, where he died."

"Not even that."

Lieutenant Guevara hesitated.

“I am an old soldier,” he said at last, in a voice full of compassion, “and only know how to say bluntly what I have to tell. Your father died in prison.”

Ibarra sprang back, his eyes fixed on the lieutenant’s.

“Died in prison? Who died in prison?”

“Your father,” said the lieutenant, his voice still gentler.

“My father—in prison? What are you saying? Do you know who my father was?” and he seized the old man’s arm.

“I think I’m not mistaken: Don Rafael Ibarra.”

“Yes, Don Rafael Ibarra,” Crisóstomo repeated mechanically.

“You will soon learn that for an honest man to keep out of prison is a difficult matter in the Philippines.”

“You mock me! Why did he die in prison?”

“Come with me; we will talk on the way.”

They walked along in silence, the officer stroking his beard in search of inspiration.

“As you know,” he began, “your father was the richest man of the province, and if he had many friends he had also enemies. We Spaniards who come to the Philippines are seldom what we should be. I say this as truthfully of some of your ancestors as of others. Most of us come to make a fortune without regard to the means. Well, your [31]father was a man to make enemies among these adventurers, and he made enemies among the monks. I never knew exactly the ground of the trouble with Brother Dámaso, but it came to a point where the priest almost denounced him from the pulpit.
“You remember the old ex-artilleryman who collected taxes? He became the laughing-stock of the pueblo, and grew brutal and churlish accordingly. One day he chased some boys who were annoying him, and struck one down. Unfortunately your father interfered. There was a struggle and the man fell. He died within a few hours.

“Naturally your father was arrested, and then his enemies unmasked. He was called heretic, filibustero, his papers were seized, everything was made to accuse him. Any one else in his place would have been set at liberty, the physicians finding that the man died of apoplexy; but your father’s fortune, his honesty, and his scorn of everything illegal undid him. When his advocate, by the most brilliant pleading, had exposed these calumnies, new accusations arose. He had taken lands unjustly, owed men for imaginary wrongs, had relations with the tulisanes, by which his plantations and herds were unmolested. The affair became so complicated that no one could unravel it. Your father gave way under the strain, and died suddenly—alone —in prison.”

They had reached the quarters.

The lieutenant hesitated. Ibarra said nothing, but grasped the old man’s long, thin hand; then turned away, caught sight of a coach, and signalled the driver.

“Fonda de Lala,” he said, and his words were scarcely audible.[32]
[Contents]

V.
A Star in the Dark Night.

Ibarra went up to his chamber, which faced the river, threw himself down, and looked out through the open window. Across the river a brilliantly lighted house was ringing with joyous music. Had the young man been so minded, with the aid of a glass he might have seen, in that radiant atmosphere, a vision. It was a young girl, of exceeding beauty, wearing the picturesque costume of the Philippines. A semicircle of courtiers was round her. Spaniards, Chinese, natives, soldiers, curates, old and young, intoxicated with the light and music, were talking, gesturing, disputing with animation. Even Brother Sibyla deigned to address this queen, in whose splendid hair Doña Victorina was wreathing a diadem of pearls and brilliants. She was white, too white perhaps, and her deep eyes, often lowered, when she raised them showed the purity of her soul. About her fair and rounded neck, through the transparent tissue of the piña, winked, as say the Tagals, the joyous eyes of a necklace of brilliants. One man alone seemed unreached by all this light and loveliness; it was a young Franciscan, slim, gaunt, pale, who watched all from a distance, still as a statue.

But Ibarra sees none of this. Another spectacle appears to his fancy, commands his eyes. Four walls, bare and dank, enclose a narrow cell, lighted by a single streak of day. On the moist and noisome floor is a mat; on the mat an old man dying. Beaten down by fever, he lies and looks [33]about him, calling a name, in strangling voice, with tears. No one —a clanking chain, an echoed groan somewhere; that was all. And away off in the bright world, laughing, singing, drenching flowers with wine, a young man.... One by one the lights go out in the festal house: no more of noise, or song, or harp; but in Ibarra's ears always the agonizing cry.

Silence has drawn her deep breath over Manila; all its life seems gone out, save that a cock's crow alternates with the bells of clock towers and the melancholy watch-cry of the guard. A quarter moon comes up, flooding with its pale light the universal sleep. Even Ibarra, wearied more perhaps with his sad thoughts than his long voyage, sleeps too. Only the young Franciscan, silent and motionless just now at the feast, awake still. His elbow on the window-place of his little cell, his chin sunk in his palm, he

watches a glittering star. The star pales, goes out, the slender moon loses her gentle light, but the monk stays on; motionless, he looks toward the horizon, lost now behind the morning mists, over the field of Bagumbayan, over the sleeping sea.[34]

[Contents]

VI.
Captain Tiago and Maria.

While our friends are still asleep or breakfasting, we will sketch the portrait of Captain Tiago. We have no reason to ignore him, never having been among his guests. Short, less dark than most of his compatriots, of full face and slightly corpulent, Captain Tiago seemed younger than his age. His rounded cranium, very small and elongated behind, was covered with hair black as ebony. His eyes, small and straight set, kept always the same expression. His nose was straight and finely cut, and if his mouth had not been deformed by the use of tobacco and buyo, he had not been wrong in thinking himself a handsome man.

He was reputed the richest resident of Binondo, and had large estates in La Pampanga, on the Laguna de Bay, and at San Diego. From its baths, its famous gallera, and his recollections of the place, San Diego was his favorite pueblo, and here he passed two months every year. He had also properties at Santo Cristo, in the Calle de Anloague, and in the Calle Rosario; the exploitation of the opium traffic was shared between him and a Chinese, and, needless to say, brought him great gains. He was purveyor to the prisoners at Bilibid, and furnished zacate to many Manila houses. On good terms with all authority, shrewd, pliant, daring in speculation, he was the sole rival of a certain Perez in the awards of divers contracts which the Philippine Government always places in privileged hands. From all of which it resulted that Captain Tiago was as happy [35]as can be a man whose small head announces his native origin. He was rich, and at peace with God, with the Government, and with men.

That he was at peace with God could not be doubted. One has no motive for being at enmity with Him when one is well in the land, and has never had to ask Him for anything. From the grand salon of the Manila home, a little door, hid behind a silken curtain, led to a chapel—something obligatory in a Filipino house. There were Santiago's Lares, and if we use this word, it is because the master of the house was rather a poly- than a monotheist. Here, in sculpture and oils, were saints, martyrdoms, and miracles; a chapter could scarcely enumerate them all. Before these images Santiago burned his candles and made his requests known.

That he was at peace with the Government, however difficult the problem, could not be doubted either. Incapable of a new idea, and contented with his lot, he was disposed to obey even to the lowest functionary, and to offer him capons, hams, and Chinese fruits at all seasons. If he heard the natives maligned, not considering himself one, he chimed in and said worse: one criticised the Chinese merchants or the Spaniards, he, who thought himself pure Iberian, did it too. He was for two years gobernadorcillo of the rich association of half-breeds, in the face of protestations from many who considered him a native. The impious called him fool; the poor, pitiless and cruel; his inferiors, a tyrant.

As to his past, he was the only son of a rich sugar merchant, who died when Santiago was still at school. He had then to quit his studies and give himself to business. He married a young girl of Santa Cruz, who brought him social rank and helped his fortunes.

The absence of an heir in the first six years of marriage [36]made Captain Tiago's thirst for riches almost blameworthy. In vain all this time did Doña Pia make novenas and pilgrimages and scatter alms. But at length she was to become a mother. Alas! like Shakespeare's fisherman who lost his songs when he found a treasure, she never smiled again, and died, leaving a beautiful baby girl, whom Brother Dámaso presented at the font. The child was called Maria Clara.

Maria Clara grew, thanks to the care of good Aunt Isabel. Her eyes, like her mother's, were large, black, and shaded by long lashes; sparkling and mirthful when she laughed; when she did not, thoughtful and profound, even sad. Her curly hair was almost blond, her nose perfect; and her mouth, small and sweet like her mother's, was flanked by charming dimples. The little thing, idol of every one, lived amid smiles and love. The monks fêted her. They dressed her in white for their processions, mingled jasmine and lilies in her hair, gave her little silver wings, and in her hands blue ribbons, the reins of fluttering white doves. She was so joyous, had such a candid baby speech, that Captain Tiago, enraptured with her, passed his time in blessing the saints.

In the lands of the sun, at thirteen or fourteen, the child becomes a woman. At this age full of mysteries, Maria Clara entered the convent of Santa Catalina, to remain several years. With tears she parted from the sole

companion of her childish games, CrisóstomoIbarra, who in turn was soon to leave his home. Some years after his departure, Don Rafael and Captain Tiago, knowing the inclinations of their children, agreed upon their marriage. This arrangement was received with eager joy by two hearts beating at two extremities of the world.[37]

[Contents]

VII.
Idylle.

The sky was blue. A fresh breeze stirred the leaves and shook the nodding "angels' heads," the aerial plants, and the many other adornments of the terrace. Maria and Crisóstomo were there, alone together for the first time since his return. They began with charming futilities, so sweet to those who understand, so meaningless to others. She is sister to Cain, a little jealous; she says to her lover: "Did you never forget me among the many beautiful women you have seen?"

He too, he is brother to Cain, a bit subtle.

"Could I ever forget you!" he answered, gazing into the dark eyes. "Your remembrance made powerless that lotus flower, Europe, which steeps out of the memory of many of my countrymen the hopes and wrongs of our land. It seemed as if the spirit, the poetic incarnation of my country was you, frank and lovely daughter of the Philippines! My love for you and that for her fused in one."

"I know only your pueblo, Manila and Antipolo," replied the young girl, radiant; "but I have always thought of you, and though my confessor commanded it, I was never able to forget you. I used to think over all our childish plays and quarrels. Do you remember the day you were really angry? Your mother had taken us to wade in the brook, behind the reeds. You put a crown of orange flowers on my head and called me Chloe. But your mother took the flowers and ground them with a stone, to mix with *gogo*, for [38]washing our hair. You cried. 'Stupid,' said she, 'you shall see how good your hair smells!' I laughed; at that you were angry and wouldn't speak to me, while I wanted to cry. On the way home, when the sun was very hot, I picked some sage leaves for your head. You smiled your thanks, and we were friends again."
Ibarra opened his pocketbook and took out a paper in which were some leaves, blackened and dry, but fragrant still.

"Your sage leaves," he replied to her questioning look.

In her turn, she drew out a little white satin purse.

“Hands off!” as he reached out for it, “there’s a letter in it!”

“My letter of good-by?”

“Have you written me any others, señor mio?”

“What is in it?”

“Lots of fibs, excuses of a bad debtor,” she laughed. “If you’re good I will read it to you, suppressing the gallantries, though, so you won’t suffer too much.” And lifting the paper to hide her face, she began:

“‘My——’ I’ll not read what follows, because it’s a fib”; and she ran her eyes over several lines. “In spite of my prayers, I must go. ‘You are no longer a boy,’ my father said, ‘you must think of the future. You have to learn things your own country cannot teach you, if you would be useful to her some day. What, almost a man and I see you in tears?’ Upon that I confessed my love for you. He was silent, then placing his hand on my shoulder he said in a voice full of emotion: ‘Do you think you alone know how to love; that it costs your father nothing to let you go away from him? It is not long since we lost your mother, and I am growing old, yet I accept my solitude and run the risk of never seeing you again. For you the future opens, for me it shuts; the fire of youth is yours, frost touches[39]me, and it is you who weep, you who do not know how to sacrifice the present to a to-morrow good for you and for your country.”
Ibarra’s agitation stopped the reading; he had become very pale and was walking back and forth.

“What is it? You are ill!” cried Maria, going toward him.

“With you I have forgotten my duty; I should be on my way to the pueblo. To-morrow is the Feast of the Dead.”

Maria was silent. She fixed on him her great, thoughtful eyes, then turned to pick some flowers.

“Go,” she said, and her voice was deep and sweet; “I keep you no longer. In a few days we shall see each other again. Put these flowers on your father’s grave.”

A little later, Captain Tiago found Maria in the chapel, at the foot of a statue of the Virgin, weeping. “Come, come,” said he, to console her; “burn some candles to St. Roch and St. Michael, patrons of travellers, for the tulisanes are numerous: better spend four réales for wax than pay a ransom.”[40]
[Contents]

VIII.
Reminiscences.

Ibarra's carriage was crossing one of the most animated quarters of Manila. The street life that had saddened him the night before, now, in spite of his sorrow, made him smile. Everything awakened a world of sleeping recollections.

These streets were not yet paved, so if the sun shone two days continuously, they turned to powder which covered everything. But let it rain a day, you had a mire, reflecting at night the shifting lamps of the carriages and bespattering the foot-passengers on the narrow walks. How many women had lost their embroidered slippers in these muddy waves!

The good and honorable pontoon bridge, so characteristically Filipino, doing its best to be useful in spite of natural faults, and rising or falling with the caprices of the Pasig,—that brave bridge was no more. The new Spanish bridge drew Ibarra's attention. Carriages passed continuously, drawn by groups of dwarf horses, in splendid harness. In these sat at ease government clerks going to their bureaus, officers, Chinese, self-satisfied and ridiculously grave monks, canons. In an elegant victoria, Ibarra thought he recognized Father Dámaso, deep in thought. From an open carriage, where his wife and two daughters accompanied him, Captain Tinong waved a friendly greeting.

Then came the Botanical Gardens, then old Manila, still enclosed in its ditches and walls; beyond that the sea; beyond [41]that, Europe, thought Ibarra. But the little hill of Bagumbayan drove away all fancies. He remembered the man who had opened the eyes of his intelligence, taught him to find out the true and the just. It was an old priest, and the holy man had died there, on that field of execution!
To these thoughts he replied by murmuring: "No, after all, first the country, first the Philippines, daughters of Spain, first the Spanish home-land!"

His carriage rolled on. It passed a cart drawn by two horses whose hempen harness told of the back country. Sometimes there sounded the slow and heavy tread of a pensive carabao, drawing a great tumbrel; its conductor, on his buffalo skin, accompanying, with a monotonous and melancholy chant,

the strident creaking of the wheels. Sometimes there was the dull sound of a native sledge's worn runners. In the fields grazed the herds, and among them white herons gravely promenaded, or sat tranquil on the backs of sleepy oxen beatifically chewing their cuds of prairie grass. Let us leave the young man, wholly occupied now with his thoughts. The sun which makes the tree-tops burn, and sends the peasants running, when they feel the hot ground through their thick shoes; the sun which halts the countrywoman under a clump of great reeds, and makes her think of things vague and strange—that sun has no enchantment for him.

While the carriage, staggering like a drunken man over the uneven ground, passes a bamboo bridge, mounts a rough hillside or descends its steep slope, let us return to Manila.[42]

[Contents]

IX.
Affairs of the Country.

Ibarra had not been mistaken. It was indeed Father Dámaso he had seen, on his way to the house which he himself had just left.

Maria Clara and Aunt Isabel were entering their carriage when the monk arrived. “Where are you going?” he asked, and in his preoccupation he gently tapped the young girl’s cheek.

“To the convent to get my things,” said she.

“Ah! ah! well, well! we shall see who is the stronger, we shall see!” he murmured, as he left the two women somewhat surprised and went up the steps.

“He’s probably committing his sermon,” said Aunt Isabel. “Come, we are late!”

We cannot say whether Father Dámaso was committing a sermon, but he must have been absorbed in important things, for he did not offer his hand to Captain Tiago.

“Santiago,” he said, “we must have a serious talk. Come into your office.”

Captain Tiago felt uneasy. He answered nothing, but followed the gigantic priest, who closed the door behind them.

While they talk, let us see what has become of Father Sibyla.

The learned Dominican, his mass once said, had set out for the convent of his order, which stands at the entrance [43]to the city, near the gate bearing alternately, according to the family reigning at Madrid, the name of Magellan or Isabella II.
Brother Sibyla entered, crossed several halls, and knocked at a door.

“Come in,” said a faint voice.

“God give health to your reverence,” said the young Dominican, entering. Seated in a great armchair was an old priest, meagre, jaundiced, like

Rivera's saints. His eyes, deep-sunken in their orbits, were arched with heavy brows, intensifying the flashes of their dying light.

Brother Sibyla was moved. He inclined his head, and seemed to wait.

"Ah!" gasped the sick man, "they recommend an operation! An operation at my age! Oh, this country, this terrible country! You see what it does for all of us, Hernando!"

"And what has your reverence decided?"

"To die! Could I do otherwise? I suffer too much, but—I've made others suffer. I'm paying my debt. And you? How are you? What do you bring me?"

"I came to talk of the mission you gave me."

"Ah! and what is there to say?"

"They've told us fairy tales," answered Brother Sibyla wearily. "Young Ibarra seems a sensible fellow. He is not stupid at all, and thoroughly manly."

"Is it so!"

"Hostilities began yesterday."

"Ah! and how?"

Brother Sibyla briefly recounted what had passed between Brother Dámaso and Crisóstomo.

"Besides," he said in conclusion, "the young man is going to marry the daughter of Captain Tiago, who was educated at the convent of our sisters. He is rich; he would [44]not go about making himself enemies and compromise at once his happiness and his fortune."
The sick man moved his hand in sign of assent.

"Yes, you are right. He should be ours, body and soul. But if he declare himself our enemy, so much the better!"

Brother Sibyla looked at the old man in surprise.

“For the good of our sacred order, you understand,” he added, breathing with difficulty; “I prefer attack to the flatteries and adulations of friends; besides, those are bought.”

“Your reverence believes that?”

The old man looked at him sadly.

“Remember this well,” he went on, catching his breath; “our power lasts as long as it’s believed in. If we’re attacked, the Government reasons: ‘They are assailed because in them is seen an obstacle to liberty: therefore we must support them!’”

“But if the Government should listen to our enemies, if it should come to covet what we have amassed—if there should be a man hardy enough——”

“Ah! then beware!”

Both were silent.

“And too,” the sick man continued, “we have need of attack to show us our faults and make us better them. Too much flattery deceives us; we sleep; and more, it makes us ridiculous, and the day we become ridiculous we fall as we have fallen in Europe. Money will no longer come to our churches. No one will buy scapulary, penitential cords, anything; and when we cease to be rich, we can no longer convince the conscience. And the worst is, that we’re working our own destruction. For one thing, this immoderate thirst for gain, which I’ve combated in vain in all our chapters, this thirst will be our ruin. I fear we are already declining. God blinds whom He will destroy.”[45]
“We shall always have our lands.”

“But every year we raise their price, and force the Indian to buy of others. The people are beginning to murmur. We ought not to increase the burdens we’ve already laid on their shoulders.”

“So your reverence believes that the revenues——”

“Talk no more of money,” interrupted the old man with aversion. “You say the lieutenant threatened Father Dámaso?”

“Yes, Father,” replied Sibyla, half smiling; “but this morning he told me the sherry had mounted to his head, and he thought it must have been the same with Brother Dámaso. ‘And your threat?’ I asked jestingly. ‘Father,’ said he, ‘I know how to keep my word when it doesn’t smirch my honor; I was never an informer—and that’s why I am only a lieutenant.’”

Though the lieutenant had not carried out his threat to go to Malacañang, the captain-general none the less knew what had happened. A young officer told the story.

“From whom do you have it?” demanded His Excellency, smiling.

“From De Laruja.”

The captain-general smiled again, and added:

“Woman’s tongue, monk’s tongue doesn’t wound. I don’t wish to get entangled with these men in skirts. Besides, the provincial made light of my orders; to punish this priest I demanded that his parish be changed. Well, they gave him a better. Monkishness! as we say in Spain.”

Alone, His Excellency ceased to smile.

“Oh! if the people were not so dense, how easy to bridle their reverences! But every nation merits its lot!”

Meanwhile Captain Tiago finished his conference with Father Dámaso.[46] “And now you are warned,” said the Franciscan upon leaving. “This would have been avoided if you hadn’t equivocated when I asked you how the matter stood. Don’t make any more false moves, and trust her godfather.”

Captain Tiago took two or three turns about the room, reflecting and sighing. Then suddenly, as if a happy thought had struck him, running to the oratory, he extinguished the two candles lighted for the safeguard of Ibarra.[47]

[Contents]

X.
The Pueblo.

Almost on the banks of the lake, in the midst of meadows and streams, is the pueblo of San Diego. It exports sugar, rice, coffee, and fruits, or sells these articles of merchandise at low prices to Chinese traders.

When, on a clear day, the children climb to the top stage of the moss-grown and vine-clad church tower, there are joyous exclamations. Each picks out his own little roof of *nipa*, tile, zinc, or palm. Beyond they see the rio, a monstrous crystal serpent asleep on a carpet of green. Trunks of palm trees, dipping and swaying, join the two banks, and if, as bridges, they leave much to be desired for trembling old men and poor women who must cross with heavy baskets on their heads, on the other hand they make fine gymnastic apparatus for the young.

But what besides the rio the children never fail to talk about is a certain wooded peninsula in this sea of cultivated land. Its ancient trees never die, unless the lightning strikes their high tops. Dust gathers layer on layer in their hollow trunks, the rain makes soil of it, the birds bring seeds, a tropical vegetation grows there in wild freedom: bushes, briers, curtains of netted bind-weed, spring from the roots, reach from tree to tree, hang swaying from the branches, and Flora, as if yet unsatisfied, sows on the trees themselves; mosses and fungi live on the creased bark, and graceful aerial guests pierce with their tendrils the hospitable branches.[48]
This wood is the subject of a legend.

When the pueblo was but a group of poor cabins, there arrived one day a strange old Spaniard with marvellous eyes, who scarcely spoke the Tagal. He wished to buy lands having thermal springs, and did so, paying in money, dress, and jewelry. Suddenly he disappeared, leaving no trace. The people of the pueblo had begun to think of him as a magician, when one day his body was found hanging high to the branch of a giant fig tree. After it had been buried at the foot of the tree, no one cared much to venture in that quarter.

A few months later there arrived a young Spanish halfbreed, who claimed to be the old man’s son. He settled, and gave himself to agriculture. Don

Saturnino was taciturn and of violent temper, but very industrious. Late in life he married a woman of Manila, who bore him Don Rafael, the father of Crisóstomo.

Don Rafael, from his youth, was much beloved. He rapidly developed his father's lands, the population multiplied, the Chinese came, the hamlet grew to a pueblo, the native curate died and was replaced by Father Dámaso. And all this time the people respected the sepulchre of the old Spaniard, and held it in superstitious awe. Sometimes, armed with sticks and stones, the children dared run near it to gather wild fruits; but while they were busy at this, or stood gazing at the bit of rope still dangling from the limb, a stone or two would fall from no one knew where. Then with cries of "The old man! the old man!" they threw down sticks and fruit, ran in all directions, between the rocks and bushes, and did not stop till they were out of the woods, all pale and breathless, some crying, few daring to laugh.[49]

[Contents]

XI.
The Sovereigns.

Who was the ruler of the pueblo? Not Don Rafael during his lifetime, though he possessed the most land, and nearly every one owed him. As he was modest, and gave little value to his deeds, no party formed around him, and we have seen how he was deserted and attacked when his fortunes fell.

Was it Captain Tiago? It is true his arrival was always heralded with music, he was given banquets by his debtors, and loaded with presents; but he was laughed at in secret, and called Sacristan Tiago.

Was it by chance the town mayor, the gobernadorcillo? Alas! he was an unfortunate, who governed not, but obeyed; did not dispose, but was disposed of. And yet he had to answer to the alcalde for all these dispositions, as if they emanated from his own brain. Be it said in his favor that he had neither stolen nor usurped his honors, but that they cost him five thousand pesos and much humiliation.

Perhaps then it was God? But to most of these good people, God seemed one of those poor kings surrounded by favorites to whom their subjects always take their supplications, never to them.

No, San Diego was a sort of modern Rome. The curate was the pope at the Vatican; the alférez of the civil guard, the King in the Quirinal. Here as there, difficulties arose from the situation.

The present curate, Brother Bernardo Salvi, was the [50]young and silent Franciscan we have already seen. In mode of life and in appearance he was very unlike his predecessor, Brother Dámaso. He seemed ill, was always thoughtful, accomplished strictly his religious duties, and was careful of his reputation. Through his zeal, almost all his parishioners had speedily become members of the Third Order of St. Francis, to the great dismay of the rival order, that of the Holy Rosary. Four or five scapularies were suspended around every neck, knotted cords encircled all the waists, and the innumerable processions of the order were a joy to see. The head sacristan took in a small fortune, selling—or giving as alms, to put it more correctly—all the paraphernalia necessary to save the soul and combat the devil. It is

well known that this evil spirit, who once dared attack God face to face, and accuse His divine word, as the book of Job tells us, is now so cowardly and feeble that he flees at sight of a bit of painted cloth, and fears a knotted cord.

Brother Salvi again greatly differed from Brother Dámaso—who set everything right with fists or ferrule, believing it the only way to reach the Indian—in that he punished with fines the faults of his subordinates, rarely striking them.

From his struggles with the curate, the alférez had a bad reputation among the devout, which he deserved, and shared with his wife, a hideous and vile old Filipino woman named Doña Consolacion. The husband avenged his conjugal woes on himself by drinking like a fish; on his subordinates, by making them exercise in the sun; and most frequently on his wife, by kicks and drubbings. The two fought famously between themselves, but were of one mind when it was a question of the curate. Inspired by his wife, the officer ordered that no one be abroad in the streets after nine at night. The priest, who did not like this restriction, retorted in lengthy sermons, whenever the [51]alférez went to church. Like all impenitents, the alférez did not mend his ways for that, but went out swearing under his breath, arrested the first sacristan he met, and made him clean the yard of the barracks. So the war went on. All this, however, did not prevent the alférez and the curate chatting courteously enough when they met.

And they were the rulers of the pueblo of San Diego.[52]

[Contents]

XII.
All Saints' Day.

The cemetery of San Diego is in the midst of rice-fields. It is approached by a narrow path, powdery on sunny days, navigable on rainy. A wooden gate and a wall half stone, half bamboo stalks, succeed in keeping out men, but not the curate's goats, nor the pigs of his neighbors. In the middle of the enclosure is a stone pedestal supporting a great wooden cross. Storms have bent the strip of tin on which were the I. N. R. I., and the rain has washed off the letters. At the foot of the cross is a confused heap of bones and skulls thrown out by the grave-digger. Everywhere grow in all their vigor the bitter-sweet and rose-bay. Some tiny flowerets, too, tint the ground—blossoms which, like the mounded bones, are known to their Creator only. They are like little pale smiles, and their odor scents of the tomb. Grass and climbing plants fill the corners, cover the walls, adorning this otherwise bare ugliness; they even penetrate the tombs, through earthquake fissures, and fill their yawning gaps.

At this hour two men are digging near the crumbling wall. One, the grave-digger, works with the utmost indifference, throwing aside a skull as a gardener would a stone. The other is preoccupied; he perspires, he breathes hard.

"Oh!" he says at length in Tagalo. "Hadn't we better dig in some other place? This grave is too recent."

"All the graves are the same, one is as recent as another."[53]
"I can't endure this!"

"What a woman! You should go and be a clerk! If you had dug up, as I did, a boy of twenty days, at night, in the rain——"

"Uh-h-h! And why did you do that?"

The grave-digger seemed surprised.

"Why? How do I know, I was ordered to."

"Who ordered you?"

At this question the grave-digger straightened himself, and examined the rash young man from head to foot.

“Come! come! You’re curious as a Spaniard. A Spaniard asked me the same question, but in secret. I’m going to say to you what I said to him: the curate ordered it.”

“Oh! and what did you do with the body?”

“The devil! if I didn’t know you, I should take you for the police. The curate told me to bury it in the Chinese cemetery, but it’s a long way there, and the body was heavy. ‘Better be drowned,’ I said to myself, ‘than lie with the Chinese,’ and I threw it into the lake.”

“No, no, stop digging!” interrupted the younger man, with a cry of horror, and throwing down his spade he sprang out of the grave.

The grave-digger watched him run off signing himself, laughed, and went to work again.

The cemetery began to fill with men and women in mourning. Some of them came for a moment to the open grave, discussed some matter, seemed not to be agreed, and separated, kneeling here and there. Others were lighting candles; all began to pray devoutly. One heard sighing and sobs, and over all a confused murmur of “*requiem æternam*.”

A little old man, with piercing eyes, entered uncovered. At sight of him some laughed, others frowned. The old [54]man seemed to take no account of this. He went to the heap of skulls, knelt, and searched with his eyes. Then with the greatest care he lifted the skulls one by one, wrinkling his brows, shaking his head, and looking on all sides. At length he rose and approached the grave-digger.
“Ho!” said he.

The other raised his eyes.

“Did you see a beautiful skull, white as the inside of a cocoanut?”

The grave-digger shrugged his shoulders.

“Look,” said the old man, showing a piece of money; “it’s all I have, but I’ll give it to you if you find it.”

The gleam of silver made the man reflect. He looked toward the heap and said:

“It isn’t there? No? Then I don’t know where it is.”

“You don’t know? When those who owe me pay, I’ll give you more. ’Twas the skull of my wife, and if you find it——”

“It isn’t there? Then I know nothing about it, but I can give you another.”

“You are like the grave you dig,” cried the old man, furious. “You know not the value of what you destroy! For whom is this grave?”

“How do I know? For a dead man!” replied the other with temper.

“Like the grave, like the grave,” the old man repeated with a dry laugh. “You know neither what you cast out nor what you keep. Dig! dig!” And he went toward the gate.

Meanwhile the grave-digger had finished his task, and two mounds of fresh, reddish earth rose beside the grave. Drawing from his pocket some buyo, he regarded dully what was going on around him, sat down, and began to chew.

At that moment a carriage, which had apparently made [55]a long journey, stopped at the entrance to the cemetery. Ibarra got out, followed by an old servant, and silently made his way along the path.
“It is there, behind the great cross, señor,” said the servant, as they approached the spot where the grave-digger was sitting.

Arrived at the cross, the old servant looked on all sides, and became greatly confused. “It was there,” he muttered; “no, there, but the ground has been broken.”

Ibarra looked at him in anguish.

The servant appealed to the grave-digger.

“Where is the grave that was marked with a cross like this?” he demanded; and stooping, he traced a Byzantine cross on the ground.

“Were there flowers growing on it?”

“Yes, jasmine and pansies.”

The grave-digger scratched his ear and said with a yawn:

“Well, the cross I burned.”

“Burned! and why?”

“Because the curate ordered it.”

Ibarra drew his hand across his forehead.

“But at least you can show us the grave.”

“The body’s no longer there,” said the grave-digger calmly.

“What are you saying!”

“Yes,” the man went on, with a smile, “I put a woman in its place, eight days ago.”

“Are you mad?” cried the servant; “it isn’t a year since he was buried.”

“Father Dámaso ordered it; he told me to take the body to the Chinese cemetery; I——”

He got no farther, and started back in terror at sight of Crisóstomo’s face. Crisóstomo seized his arm. “And you did it?” he demanded, in a terrible voice.[56]

“Don’t be angry, señor,” replied the grave-digger, pale and trembling. “I didn’t bury him with the Chinese. Better be drowned than that, I thought to myself, and I threw him into the water.”

Ibarra stared at him like a madman. “You’re only a poor fool!” he said at length, and pushing him away, he rushed headlong for the gate, stumbling over graves and bones, and painfully followed by the old servant.

“That’s what the dead bring us,” grumbled the gravedigger. “The curate orders me to dig the man up, and this fellow breaks my arm for doing it. That’s the way with the Spaniards. I shall lose my place!”[57]

[Contents]

XIII.
The Little Sacristans.

The little old man of the cemetery wandered absent-minded along the streets.

He was a character of the pueblo. He had once been a student in philosophy, but abandoned his course at the demands of his mother. The good woman, finding that her son had talent, feared lest he become a savant and forget God; she let him choose, therefore, between studying for the priesthood and leaving the college of San José. He was in love, took the latter course, and married. Widowed and orphaned within a year, he found in books a deliverance from sadness, idleness, and the *gallera*. Unhappily he studied too much, bought too many books, neglected to care for his fortune, and came to financial ruin. Some people called him Don Astasio, or Tasio the philosopher; others, and by far the greater number, Tasio the fool.

The afternoon threatened a tempest. Pale flashes of lightning illumined the leaden sky; the atmosphere was heavy and close.

Arrived at the church door, Tasio entered and spoke to two little boys, one ten years old perhaps, the other seven.

“Coming with me?” he asked. “Your mother has ready a dinner fit for curates.”

“The head sacristan won’t let us leave yet,” said the elder. “We’re going into the tower to ring the bells.”

“Take care! don’t go too near the bells in the storm,” [58]said Tasio, and, head down, he went off, thinking, toward the outskirts of the town.
Soon the rain came down in torrents, the thunder echoed clap on clap, each detonation preceded by an awful zig-zag of fire. The tempest grew in fury, and, scarce able to ride on the shifting wind, the plaintive voices of the bells rang out a lamentation.

The boys were in the tower, the younger, timid, in spite of his great black eyes, hugging close to his brother. They resembled one another, but the elder had the stronger and more thoughtful face. Their dress was poor,

patched, and darned. The wind beat in the rain a little, where they were, and set the flame of their candle dancing.

“Pull your rope, Crispin,” said the elder to his little brother.

Crispin pulled, and heard a feeble plaint, quickly silenced by a thunder crash. “If we were only home with mama,” he mourned, “I shouldn’t be afraid.”

The other did not answer. He watched the candle melt, and seemed thoughtful.

“At least, no one there would call me a thief; mama would not have it. If she knew they had beaten me——” The elder gave the great cord a sharp pull; a deep, sonorous tone trembled out.

“Pay what they say I stole! Pay it, brother!”

“Are you mad, Crispin? Mama would have nothing to eat; they say you stole two onces, and two onces make thirty-two pesos.”

The little fellow counted thirty-two on his fingers.

“Six hands and two fingers. And each finger makes a peso, and each peso how many cuartos?”

“A hundred sixty.”

“And how much is a hundred sixty?”

“Thirty-two hands.”[59]
Crispin regarded his little paws.

“Thirty-two hands,” he said, “and each finger a cuarto! O mama! how many cuartos! and with them one could buy shoes, and a hat for the sun, and an umbrella for the rain, and clothes for mama.”

Crispin became pensive.

“What I’m afraid of is that mama will be angry with you when she hears about it.”

“You think so?” said Crispin, surprised. “But I’ve never had a cuarto except the one they gave me at Easter. Mama won’t believe I stole; she won’t believe it!”

“But if the curate says so——”

Crispin began to cry, and said through his sobs:

“Then go alone, I won’t go. Tell mama I’m sick.”

“Crispin, don’t cry,” said his brother. “If mama seems to believe what they say, you’ll tell her that the sacristan lies, that the curate believes him, that they say we are thieves because our father——”

A head came out of the shadows in the little stairway, and as if it had been Medusa’s, it froze the words on the children’s lips.

The head was long and lean, with a shock of black hair. Blue glasses concealed one sightless eye. It was the chief sacristan who had thus stolen upon the children.

“You, Basilio, are fined two réales for not ringing regularly. And you, Crispin, stay to-night till you find what you’ve stolen.”

“We have permission,” began Basilio; “our mother expects us at nine.”

“You won’t go at nine o’clock either; you shall stay till ten.”

“But, señor, after nine one can’t pass through the streets——”[60]
“Are you trying to dictate to me?” demanded the sacristan, and he seized Crispin’s arm.

“Señor, we have not seen our mother for a week,” entreated Basilio, taking hold of his brother as if to protect him.

With a stroke on the cheek the sacristan made him let go, and dragged off Crispin, who commenced to cry, let himself fall, tried to cling to the floor, and besought Basilio to keep him. But the sacristan, dragging the child, disappeared in the shadows.

Basilio stood mute. He heard his little brother’s body strike against the stairs; he heard a cry, blows, heart-rending words, growing fainter and fainter, lost at last in the distance.

“When shall I be strong enough?” he murmured, and dashed down the stairs.

He reached the choir and listened. He could still hear his little brother’s voice; then over the cry, “Mama!—Brother!” a door shut. Trembling, damp with sweat, holding his mouth with his hand to stifle a cry, he stood a moment looking about in the dim church. The doors were closed, the windows barred. He went back to the tower, did not stop at the second stage, where the bells were rung, but climbed to the third, loosed the ropes that held the tongues of the bells, then went down again, pale, his eyes gleaming, but without tears.

The rain commenced to slacken and the sky to clear. Basilio knotted the ropes, fastened an end to a beam of the balcony, and, forgetting to blow out the candle, glided down into the darkness.

Some minutes later voices were heard in a street of the pueblo, and two rifle shots rang out; but it raised no alarm, and all again became silent.[61]
[Contents]

XIV.
Sisa.

Nearly an hour's walk from the pueblo lived the mother of Basilio and Crispin, wife of a man who passed his time in lounging or watching cock-fights while she struggled to bring up their children. The husband and wife saw each other rarely, and their interviews were painful. To feed his vices, he had robbed her of her few trinkets, and when the unhappy Sisa had nothing more with which to satisfy his caprices he began to abuse her. Without much strength of will, dowered with more heart than reason, she only knew how to love and to weep. Her husband was a god, her children were angels. He, who knew how much he was adored and feared, like other false gods, grew more and more arbitrary and cruel.

The stars were glittering in the sky cleared by the tempest. Sisa sat on the wooden bench, her chin in her hand, watching some branches smoulder on her hearth of uncut stones. On these stones was a little pan where rice was cooking, and among the cinders were three dry sardines.

She was still young, and one saw she had been beautiful. Her eyes, which, with her soul, she had given to her sons, were fine, deep, and fringed with dark lashes; her face was regular; her skin pure olive. In spite of her youth, suffering, hunger sometimes, had begun to hollow her cheeks. Her abundant hair, once her glory, was still carefully dressed—but from habit, not coquetry.

All day Sisa had been thinking of the pleasure coming at [62]night. She picked the finest tomatoes in her garden—favorite dish of little Crispin; from her neighbor, Tasio, she got a fillet of wild boar and a wild duck's thigh for Basilio, and she chose and cooked the whitest rice on the threshing-floor.

Alas! the father arrived. Good-by to the dinner! He ate the rice, the filet of wild boar, the duck's thigh, and the tomatoes. Sisa said nothing, happy to see her husband satisfied, and so much happier that, having eaten, he remembered he had children and asked where they were. The poor mother smiled. She had promised herself to eat nothing—there was not enough left for three; but the father had thought of his sons, that was better than food.

Sisa, left alone, wept a little; but she thought of her children, and dried her tears. She cooked the little rice she had left, and the three sardines.

Attentive to every sound, she now sat listening: a footfall strong and regular, it was Basilio's; light and unsteady, Crispin's.

But the children did not come.

To pass the time, she hummed a song. Her voice was beautiful, and when her children heard her sing "Kundiman" they cried, without knowing why. To-night her voice trembled, and the notes came tardily.

She went to the door and scanned the road. A black dog was there, searching about. It frightened Sisa, and she threw a stone, sending the dog off howling.

Sisa was not superstitious, but she had so often heard of black dogs and presentiments that terror seized her. She shut the door in haste and sat down by the light. She prayed to the Virgin, to God Himself, to take care of her boys, and most for the little Crispin. Then, drawn away from prayer by her sole preoccupation, she thought no longer of aught but her children, of all their ways, which seemed[63]to her so pleasing. Then the terror returned. Vision or reality, Crispin stood by the hearth, where he often sat to chatter to her. He said nothing, but looked at her with great, pensive eyes, and smiled.
"Mother, open! Open the door, mother!" said Basilio's voice outside.

Sisa shuddered, and the vision disappeared.[64]
[Contents]

XV.
Basilio.

Life is a Dream.

Basilio had scarcely strength to enter and fall into his mother's arms. A strange cold enveloped Sisa when she saw him come alone. She wished to speak, but found no words; to caress her son, but found no force. Yet at the sight of blood on his forehead, her voice came, and she cried in a tone which seemed to tell of a breaking heartstring:

"My children!"

"Don't be frightened, mama; Crispin stayed at the convent."

"At the convent? He stayed at the convent? Living?"

The child raised his eyes to hers.

"Ah!" she cried, passing from the greatest anguish to the utmost joy. She wept, embraced her child, covered with kisses his wounded forehead.

"And why are you hurt, my son? Did you fall?"

Basilio told her he had been challenged by the guard, ran, was shot at, and a ball had grazed his forehead.

"O God! I thank Thee that Thou didst save him!" murmured the mother.

She went for lint and vinegar water, and while she bandaged his wound:

"Why," she asked, "did Crispin stay at the convent?"

Basilio looked at her, kissed her, then little by little told the story of the lost money; he said nothing of the [65]torture of his little brother. Mother and child mingled their tears.
"Accuse my good Crispin! It's because we are poor, and the poor must bear everything," murmured Sisa. Both were silent a moment.

"But you have not eaten," said the mother. "Here are sardines and rice."

"I'm not hungry, mama; I only want some water."

“Yes, eat,” said the mother. “I know you don’t like dry sardines, and I had something else for you; but your father came, my poor child.”

“My father came?” and Basilio instinctively examined his mother’s face and hands.

The question pained the mother; she sighed.

“You won’t eat? Then we must go to bed; it is late.”

Sisa barred the door and covered the fire. Basilio murmured his prayers, and crept on the mat near his mother, who was still on her knees. She was warm, he was cold. He thought of his little brother, who had hoped to sleep this night close to his mother’s side, trembling with fear in some dark corner of the convent. He heard his cries as he had heard them in the tower; but Nature soon confused his ideas and he slept.

In the middle of the night Sisa wakened him.

“What is it, Basilio? Why are you crying?”

“I was dreaming. O mama! it was a dream, wasn’t it? Say it was nothing but a dream!”

“What were you dreaming?”

He did not answer, but sat up to dry his tears.

“Tell me the dream,” said Sisa, when he had lain down again. “I cannot sleep.”

“It is gone now, mama; I don’t remember it all.”

Sisa did not insist: she attached no importance to dreams.

“Mama,” said Basilio after a moment of silence, “I’m [66]not sleepy either. I had a project last evening. I don’t want to be a sacristan.”
“What?”

“Listen, mama. The son of Don Rafael came home from Spain to-day; he should be as kind as his father. Well, to-morrow I find Crispin, get my pay, and say I’m not going to be a sacristan. Then I’ll go see Don Crisóstomo and ask him to make me a buffalo-keeper. Crispin could go on studying

with old Tasio. Tasio's better than the curate thinks; I've often seen him praying in the church when no one else was there. What shall I lose in not being a sacristan? One earns little and loses it all in fines. I'll be a herdsman, mama, and take good care of the cows and *carabaos*, and make my master love me; then perhaps he'll let us have a cow to milk: Crispin loves milk. And I could fish in the rivers and go hunting when I get big. And by and by perhaps I could have a little land and sow sugar-cane. We could all live together, then. And old Tasio says Crispin is very bright. By and by we would send him to study at Manila, and I would work for him. Shall we, mama? He might be a doctor; what do you say?"

"What can I say, except that you are right," answered Sisa, kissing her son.

Basilio went on with his projects, talking with the confidence of a child. Sisa said yes to everything. But little by little sleep came back to the child's lids, and this time he did not cry in his dreams: that Ole-Luk-Oie, of whom Andersen tells us, unfurled over his head the umbrella with its lining of gay pictures. But the mother, past the age of careless slumbers, did not sleep.[67]
[Contents]

XVI.
At the Manse.

It was seven o'clock when Brother Salvi finished his last mass. He took off his priestly robes without a word to any one.

"Look out!" whispered the sacristans; "it is going to rain fines! And all for the fault of those children!"

The father came out of the sacristy and crossed to the manse. On the porch six or seven women sat waiting for him, and a man was walking to and fro. The woman rose, and one bent to kiss his hand, but the priest made such a gesture of impatience that she stopped short.

"He must have lost a real miser," she cried mockingly, when he had passed. "This is something unheard of: refuse his hand to the zealous Sister Rufa?"

"He was not in the confessional this morning," said a toothless old woman, Sister Sipa. "I wanted to confess, so as to get some indulgences."

"I have gained three plenary indulgences," said a young woman of pleasing face, "and applied them all to the soul of my husband."

"You have done wrong," said Sister Rufa, "one plenary is enough; you should not squander the holy indulgences. Do as I do."

"I said to myself, the more there are the better," replied young sister Juana, smiling; "but what do you do?"

Sister Rufa did not respond at once; she chewed her *buyo*, [68]and scanned her audience attentively; at length she decided to speak.
"Well, this is what I do. Suppose I gain a year of indulgences; I say: Blessed Señor Saint Dominic, have the kindness to see if there is some one in purgatory who has need of precisely a year. Then I play heads or tails. If it falls heads, no; if tails, yes. If it falls heads, I keep the indulgence, and so I make groups of a hundred years, for which there is always use. It's a pity one can't loan indulgences at interest. But do as I do, it's the best plan."

At this point Sisa appeared. She said good morning to the women, and entered the manse.

“She’s gone in, let us go too,” said the sisters, and they followed her.

Sisa felt her heart beat violently. She did not know what to say to the curate in defence of her child. She had risen at daybreak, picked all the fine vegetables left in her garden, and arranged them in a basket with platane leaves and flowers, and had been to the river to get a fresh salad of *pakô*. Then, dressed in the best she had, the basket on her head, without waking her son, she had set out for the pueblo.

She went slowly through the manse, listening if by chance she might hear a well-known voice, fresh and childish. But she met no one, heard nothing, and went on to the kitchen.

The servants and sacristans received her coldly, scarcely answering her greetings.

“Where may I put these vegetables?” she asked, without showing offence.

“There—wherever you want to,” replied the cook curtly.

Sisa, half-smiling, placed all in order on the table, and laid on top the flowers and the tender shoots of the *pakô*; then she asked a servant who seemed more friendly than the cook:[69]
“Do you know if Crispin is in the sacristy?”

The servant looked at her in surprise.

“Crispin?” said he, wrinkling his brows; “isn’t he at home?”

“Basilio is, but Crispin stayed here.”

“Oh, yes, he stayed, but he ran off afterward with all sorts of things he’d stolen. The curate sent me to report it at the quarters. The guards must be on their way to your house by this time.”

Sisa could not believe it; she opened her mouth, but her lips moved in vain.

“Go find your children,” said the cook. “Everybody sees you’re a faithful woman; the children are like their father!”

Sisa stifled a sob, and, at the end of her strength, sat down.

“Don’t cry here,” said the cook still more roughly, “the curate is ill; don’t bother him! Go cry in the street!”

The poor woman got up, almost by force, and went down the steps with the sisters, who were still gossiping of the curate’s illness. Once on the street she looked about uncertain; then, as if from a sudden resolution, moved rapidly away.[70]
[Contents]

XVII.
Story of a Schoolmaster.

The lake, girt with hills, lies tranquil, as if it had not been shaken by yesterday's tempest. At the first gleam of light which wakes the phosphorescent spirits of the water, almost on the bounds of the horizon, gray silhouettes slowly take shape. These are the barks of fishermen drawing in their nets; *cascos* and *paraos* shaking out their sails.

From a height, two men in black are silently surveying the lake. One is Ibarra, the other a young man of humble dress and melancholy face.

"This is the place," said the stranger, "where the gravedigger brought us, Lieutenant Guevara and me."

Ibarra uncovered, and stood a long time as if in prayer.

When the first horror at the story of his father's desecrated grave had passed, he had bravely accepted what could not be undone. Private wrongs must go unavenged, if one would not add to the wrongs of the country: Ibarra had been trained to live for these islands, daughters of Spain. In his country, too, a charge against a monk was a charge against the Church, and Crisóstomo was a loyal Catholic; if he knew how in his mind to separate the Church from her unworthy sons, most of his fellow-countrymen did not. And, again, his intimate life was all here. The last of his race, his home was his family; he loved ideally, and he loved the goddaughter of the malevolent priest. He was rich, and [71]therefore powerful still—and he was young. Ibarra had taken up his life again as he had found it.
His prayer finished, he warmly grasped the young man's hand.

"Do not thank me," said the other; "I owe everything to your father. I came here unknown; your father protected me, encouraged my work, furnished the poor children with books. How far away that good time seems!"

"And now?"

"Ah! now we get along as best we can."

Ibarra was silent.

“How many pupils have you?”

“More than two hundred on the list—in the classes, fifty-five.”

“And how is that?”

The schoolmaster smiled sadly.

“It is a long story.”

“Don’t think I ask from curiosity,” said Ibarra. “I have thought much about it, and it seems to me better to try to carry out my father’s ideas than to weep or to avenge his death. I wish to inspire myself with his spirit. That is why I ask this question.”

“The country will bless your memory, señor, if you carry out the splendid projects of your father. You wish to know the obstacles I meet? In a word, the plan of instruction is hopeless. The children read, write, learn by heart passages, sometimes whole books, in Castilian, without understanding a single word. Of what use is such a school to the children of our peasants!”

“You see the evil, what remedy do you propose?”

“I have none,” said the young man; “one cannot struggle alone against so many needs and against certain influences. I tried to remedy the evil of which I just spoke; I tried to carry out the order of the Government, and began [72]to teach the children Spanish. The beginning was excellent, but one day Brother Dámaso sent for me. I went up immediately, and I said good-day to him in Castilian. Without replying, he burst into laughter. At length he said, with a sidelong glance: ‘What *buenos dias! buenos dias!* It’s very pretty. You know Spanish?’ and he began to laugh again.”
Ibarra could not repress a smile.

“You laugh,” said the teacher, “and I, too, now; but I assure you I had no desire to then. I started to reply, I don’t know what, but Brother Dámaso interrupted:

“‘Don’t wear clothes that are not your own,’ he said in Tagal; ‘be content to speak your own language. Do you know about Ciruela? Well, Ciruela was a master who could neither read nor write, yet he kept school.’ And he left the room, slamming the door behind him. What was I to do? What could I,

against him, the highest authority of the pueblo, moral, political, and civil; backed by his order, feared by the Government, rich, powerful, always obeyed and believed. To withstand him was to lose my place, and break off my career without hope of another. Every one would have sided with the priest. I should have been called proud, insolent, no Christian, perhaps even anti-Spanish and *filibustero*. Heaven forgive me if I denied my conscience and my reason, but I was born here, must live here, I have a mother, and I abandoned myself to my fate, as a cadaver to the wave that rolls it."

"And you lost all hope? You have tried nothing since?"

"I was rash enough to try two more experiments, one after our change of curates; but both proved offensive to the same authority. Since then I have done my best to convert the poor babies into parrots."

"Well, I have cheerful news for you," said Ibarra. "I [73]am soon to present to the Government a project that will help you out of your difficulties, if it is approved."
The school-teacher shook his head.

"You will see, Señor Ibarra, that your projects—I've heard something of them—will no more be realized than were mine!"[74]
[Contents]

XVIII.
The Story of a Mother.

Sisa was running toward her poor little home. She had experienced one of those convulsions of being which we know at the hour of a great misfortune, when we see no possible refuge and all our hopes take flight. If then a ray of light illumine some little corner, we fly toward it without stopping to question.

Sisa ran swiftly, pursued by many fears and dark presentiments. Had they already taken her Basilio? Where had her Crispin hidden?

As she neared her home, she saw two soldiers coming out of the little garden. She lifted her eyes to heaven; heaven was smiling in its ineffable light; little white clouds swam in the transparent blue.

The soldiers had left her house; they were coming away without her children. Sisa breathed once more; her senses came back.

She looked again, this time with grateful eyes, at the sky, furrowed now by a band of *garzas*, those clouds of airy gray peculiar to the Philippines; confidence sprang again in her heart; she walked on. Once past those dreadful men, she would have run, but prudence checked her. She had not gone far, when she heard herself called imperiously. She turned, pale and trembling in spite of herself. One of the guards beckoned her.

Mechanically she obeyed: she felt her tongue grow paralyzed, her throat parch.[75]
"Speak the truth, or we'll tie you to this tree and shoot you," said one of the guards.

Sisa could do nothing but look at the tree.

"You are the mother of the thieves?"

"The mother of the thieves?" repeated Sisa, without comprehending.

"Where is the money your sons brought home last night?"

"Ah! the money——"

“Give us the money, and we’ll let you alone.”

“Señores,” said the unhappy woman, gathering her senses again, “my boys do not steal, even when they’re hungry; we are used to suffering. I have not seen my Crispin for a week, and Basilio did not bring home a cuarto. Search the house, and if you find a réal, do what you will with us; the poor are not all thieves.”

“Well then,” said one of the soldiers, fixing his eyes on Sisa’s, “follow us!”

“I—follow you?” And she drew back in terror, her eyes on the uniforms of the guards. “Oh, have pity on me! I’m very poor, I’ve nothing to give you, neither gold nor jewelry. Take everything you find in my miserable cabin, but let me—let me—die here in peace!”

“March! do you hear? and if you don’t go without making trouble, we’ll tie your hands.”

“Let me walk a little way in front of you, at least,” she cried, as they laid hold of her.

The soldiers spoke together apart.

“Very well,” said one, “when we get to the pueblo, you may. March on now, and quick!”

Poor Sisa thought she must die of shame. There was no one on the road, it is true; but the air? and the light? She covered her face, in her humiliation, and wept silently. She was indeed very miserable; every one, even her husband, [76]had abandoned her; but until now she had always felt herself respected.

As they neared the pueblo, fear seized her. In her agony she looked on all sides, seeking some succor in nature—death in the river would be so sweet. But no! She thought of her children; here was a light in the darkness of her soul.

“Afterward,” she said to herself,—“afterward, we will go to live in the heart of the forest.”

She dried her eyes, and turning to the guards:

“We are at the pueblo,” she said. Her tone was indescribable; at once a complaint, an argument, and a prayer.

The soldiers took pity on her; they replied with a gesture. Sisa went rapidly forward, then forced herself to walk tranquilly.

A tolling of bells announced the end of the high mass. Sisa hastened, in the hope of avoiding the crowd from the church, but in vain. Two women she knew passed, looked at her questioningly; she bowed with an anguished smile, then, to avoid new mortifications, she fixed her eyes on the ground.

At sight of her people turned, whispered, followed with their eyes, and though her eyes were turned away, she divined, she felt, she saw it all. A woman who by her bare head, her dress, and her manners showed what she was, cried boldly to the soldiers:

“Where did you find her? Did you get the money?”

Sisa seemed to have taken a blow in the face. The ground gave way under her feet.

“This way!” cried a guard.

Like an automaton whose mechanism is broken she turned quickly, and, seeing nothing, feeling nothing but instinct, tried to hide herself. A gate was before her; she would have entered but a voice still more imperious checked her. [77]While she sought to find whence the voice came, she felt herself pushed along by the shoulders. She closed her eyes, took two steps, then her strength left her and she fell.
It was the barracks. In the yard were soldiers, women, pigs, and chickens. Some of the women were helping the men mend their clothes or clean their arms, and humming ribald songs.

“Where is the sergeant?” demanded one of the guards angrily. “Has the alférez been informed?”

A shrug of the shoulders was the sole response; no one would take any trouble for the poor woman.

Two long hours she stayed there, half mad, crouched in a corner, her face hidden in her hands, her hair undone. At noon the alférez arrived. He

refused to believe the curate's accusations.

"Bah! monks' tricks!" said he; and ordered that the woman be released and the affair dropped.

"If he wants to find what he's lost," he added, "let him complain to the nuncio! That's all I have to say."

Sisa, who could scarcely move, was almost carried out of the barracks. When she found herself in the street, she set out as fast as she could for her home, her head bare, her hair loose, her eyes fixed. The sun, then in the zenith, burned with all his fire: not a cloud veiled his resplendent disc. The wind just moved the leaves of the trees; not a bird dared venture from the shade of the branches.

At length Sisa arrived. Troubled, silent, she entered her poor cabin, ran all about it, went out, came in, went out again. Then she ran to old Tasio's, knocked at the door. Tasio was not there. The poor thing went back and commenced to call, "Basilio! Crispin!" standing still, listening attentively. An echo repeating her calls, the sweet murmur of water from the river, the music of the reeds stirred by the breeze, were the sole voices of the solitude. [78]She called anew, mounted a hill, went down into a ravine; her wandering eyes took a sinister expression; from time to time sharp lights flashed in them, then they were obscured, like the sky in a tempest. One might have said the light of reason, ready to go out, revived and died down in turn.

She went back, and sat down on the mat where they had slept the night before—she and Basilio—and raised her eyes. Caught in the bamboo fence on the edge of the precipice, she saw a piece of Basilio's blouse. She got up, took it, and examined it in the sunlight. There were blood spots on it, but Sisa did not seem to see them. She bent over and continued to look at this rag from her child's clothing, raised it in the air, bathing it in the brazen rays. Then, as if the last gleam of light within her had finally gone out, she looked straight at the sun, with wide-staring eyes.

At length she began to wander about, crying out strange sounds. One hearing her would have been frightened; her voice had a quality the human larynx would hardly know how to produce.

The sun went down; night surprised her. Perhaps Heaven gave her sleep, and an angel's wing, brushing her pale forehead, took away that memory which no longer recalled anything but griefs. The next day Sisa roamed about, smiling, singing, and conversing with all the beings of great Nature.

Three days passed, and the inhabitants of San Diego had ceased to talk or think of unhappy Sisa and her boys. Maria Clara, who, accompanied by Aunt Isabel, had just arrived from Manila, was the chief subject of conversation. Every one rejoiced to see her, for every one loved her. They marvelled at her beauty, and speculated about her marriage with Ibarra. On this evening, Crisóstomo presented himself at the home of his fiancée; the curate arrived at the [79]same moment. The house was a delicious little nest among orange-trees and ylang-ylang. They found Maria by an open window, overlooking the lake, surrounded by the fresh foliage and delicate perfume of vines and flowers.

"The winds blow fresh," said the curate; "aren't you afraid of taking cold?"

"I don't feel the wind, father," said Maria.

"We Filipinos," said Crisóstomo, "find this season of autumn and spring together delicious. Falling leaves and budding trees in February, and ripe fruit in March, with no cold winter between, is very agreeable. And when the hot months come we know where to go."

The priest smiled, and the conversation turned to the pueblo and the festival of its patron saint, which was near.

"Speaking of fêtes," said Crisóstomo to the curate, "we hope you will join us in a picnic to-morrow, near the great fig-tree in the wood. The arrangements are all made as you wished, Maria. A small party is to start for the fishing-ground before sunrise," he went on to the curate, "and later we hope to be joined by all our friends of the pueblo."

The curate said he should be happy to come after his services were said. They chatted a few moments longer, and then Ibarra excused himself to finish giving his invitations and make his final arrangements.

As he left the house a man saluted him respectfully.

“Who are you?” asked Crisóstomo.

“You would not know my name, señor; I have been trying to see you for three days.”

“And what do you want?”

“Señor, my wife has gone mad, my children are lost, and no one will help me find them. I want your aid.”

“Come with me,” said Ibarra.

The man thanked him, and they disappeared together in the darkness of the unlighted streets.[80]
[Contents]

XIX.
The Fishing Party.

The stars were yet brilliant in the sapphire vault, and in the branches the birds were still asleep when a merry party went through the streets of the pueblo, toward the lake, lighted by the glimmer of the pitch torches here called huepes.

There were five young girls, walking rapidly, holding each other by the hand or waist, followed by several elderly ladies, and servants bearing gracefully on their heads baskets of provisions. To see these girls' faces, laughing with youth, to judge by their abundant black hair flying free in the wind, and the ample folds of their garments, we might take them for divinities of the night fleeing at the approach of day; but they were Maria Clara and her four friends, the merry Sinang, her cousin, the calm Victoria, beautiful Iday, and pensive Neneng. They talked with animation, pinched each other, whispered in each other's ears, and pealed out merry rounds of laughter.

After a while there came to meet the party a group of young men, carrying torches of reeds. They were walking, silent, to the sound of a guitar.

When the two groups met, the girls became serious and grave. The men, on the contrary, talked, laughed, and asked six questions to get half a reply.

"Is the lake smooth? Do you think we shall have a fine day?" demanded the mamas.

"Don't be disturbed, señoras, I'm a splendid swimmer," [81]said a tall, slim fellow, a merry-looking rascal with an air of mock gravity.
But they were already at the borders of the lake, and cries of delight escaped the lips of the women. They saw two great barks, bound together, picturesquely decked with garlands of flowers and various-colored festoons of fluffy drapery. Little paper lanterns hung alternating with roses, pinks, pineapples, bananas, and guavas. Rudders and oars were decorated too, and there were mats, rugs, and cushions to make comfortable seats for the ladies. In the boat, most beautifully trimmed, were a harp, guitars, accordeons, and a carabao's horn; in the other burned a ship's fire; and tea,

coffee and salabat—a tea of ginger sweetened with honey—were making for the first breakfast.

“The women here, the men there,” said the mamas, embarking; “move carefully, don’t stir the boat or we shall capsize!”

“And we’re to be in here all alone?” pouted Sinang.

Slowly the boats left the beach, reflecting in the mirror of the lake the many lights of their lanterns. In the east were the first streaks of dawn.

Comparative silence reigned. The separation established by the ladies seemed to have dedicated youth to meditation. The water was perfectly tranquil, the fishing-grounds were near; it was soon decided to abandon the oars, and breakfast. Day had come, and the lanterns were put out.

It was a beautiful morning. The light falling from the sky and reflected from the water made radiant the surface of the lake, and bathed everything in an atmosphere of clearness saturated with color, such as some marines suggest. Everybody, even the mamas, laughed and grew merry. “Do you remember, when we were girls—” they began to each other; and Maria and her young companions exchanged smiling glances.[82]

One man alone remained a stranger to this gayety—it was the helmsman. Young, of athletic build, his melancholy eyes and the severe lines of his lips gave an interest to his face, and this was heightened by his long black hair falling naturally about his muscular neck. His wrists of steel managed like a feather the large and heavy oar which served as rudder to guide the two barks.

Maria Clara had several times met his eyes, but he quickly turned them away to the shores or the mountains. Pitying his solitude, she offered him some cakes. With a certain surprise he took one, refusing the others, and thanked her in a voice scarcely audible. No one else seemed to think of him.

The early breakfast done, the party moved off toward the fishing enclosures. There were two, a little distance apart, both the property of Captain Tiago. In advance, a flock of white herons could be seen, some moving among the reeds, some flying here and there, skimming the water with their wings, and filling the air with their strident cries. Maria Clara

followed them with her eyes, as, at the approach of the two barks, they flew away from the shore.

“Do these birds have their nests in the mountains?” she asked the helmsman, less perhaps from the wish to know than to make the silent fellow talk.

“Probably, señora,” he replied, “but no one has ever yet seen them.”

“They have no nests, then?”

“I suppose they must have; if not, they are unhappy indeed.”

Maria Clara did not catch the note of sadness in his voice.

“Well?”

“They say, señora, that the nests of these birds are invisible, [83]and have the power to render invisible whoever holds them; that as the soul can be seen only in the mirror of the eyes, so these nests can be seen only in the mirror of the water.”
Maria Clara became pensive. But they had come to the first baklad, as the enclosures are called. The old sailor in charge attached the boats to the reeds, while his son prepared to mount with lines and nets.

“Wait a moment,” cried Aunt Isabel, “the fish must come directly out of the water into the pan.”

“What, good Aunt Isabel!” said Albino reproachfully, “won’t you give the poor things a moment in the air?”

Andeng, Maria’s foster-sister, was a famous cook. She began to prepare rice water, the tomatoes, and the camias; the young men, perhaps to win her good graces, aided her, while the other girls arranged the melons, and cut paayap into cigarette-like strips.

To while away the time Iday took up the harp, the instrument most often played in this part of the islands. She played well, and was much applauded. Maria thanked her with a kiss.

“Sing, Victoria, sing the ‘Marriage Song,’” demanded the ladies. This is a beautiful Tagal elegy of married life, but sad, painting its miseries rather

than its joys. The men clamored for it too, and Victoria had a lovely voice; but she was hoarse. So Maria Clara was begged to sing.

“All my songs are sad,” she said.

“Never mind,” said her companions, and without more urging she took the harp and sang in a rich and vibrant voice, full of feeling.

The chant ceased, the harp became mute; yet no one applauded; they seemed listening still. The young girls felt [84]their eyes fill with tears; Ibarra seemed disturbed; the helmsman, motionless, was gazing far away. Suddenly there came a crash like thunder. The women cried out and stopped their ears. It was Albino, filling with all the force of his lungs the carabao’s horn. There needed nothing more to bring back laughter, and dry tears.

“Do you wish to make us deaf, pagan?” cried Aunt Isabel.

“Señora,” he replied, “I’ve heard of a poor trumpeter who, from simply playing on his instrument, became the husband of a rich and noble lady.”

“So he did—the Trumpeter of Säckingen!” laughed Ibarra.

“Well,” said Albino, “we shall see if I am as happy!” and he began to blow again with still more force. There was a panic: the mamas attacked him hand and foot.

“Ouch! ouch!” he cried, rubbing his hurts; “the Philippines are far from the borders of the Rhine! For the same deed one is knighted, another put in the san-benito!”

At last Andeng announced the kettle ready for the fish.

The fisherman’s son now climbed the weir or “purse” of the enclosure. It was almost circular, a yard across, so arranged that a man could stand on top to draw out the fish with a little net or with a line.

All watched him, some thinking they saw already the quiver of the little fishes and the shimmer of their silver scales.

The net was drawn up; nothing in it; the line, no fish adorned it. The water fell back in a shower of drops, and laughed a silvery laugh. A cry of disappointment escaped from every mouth.

“You don’t understand your business,” said Albino, [85]climbing up by the young man; and he took the net. “Look now! Ready, Andeng!”
But Albino was no better fisherman. Everybody laughed.

“Don’t make a noise, you’ll drive away the fish. The net must be broken.” But every mesh was intact.

“Let me try,” said Léon, the fiancée of Iday. “Are you sure no one has been here for five days?”

“Absolutely sure.”

“Then either the lake is enchanted or I draw out something.”

He cast the line, looked annoyed, dragged the hook along in the water and murmured:

“A crocodile!”

“A crocodile!”

The word passed from mouth to mouth amid general stupefaction.

“What’s to be done?”

“Capture him!”

But nobody offered to go down. The water was deep.

“We ought to drag him in triumph at our stern,” said Sinang; “he has eaten our fish!”

“I’ve never seen a crocodile alive,” mused Maria Clara.

The helmsman got up, took a rope, lithely climbed the little platform, and in spite of warning cries dived into the weir. The water, troubled an instant, became smooth; the abyss closed mysteriously.

“Heaven!” cried the women, “we are going to have a catastrophe!”

The water was agitated: a combat seemed to be going on below. Above, there was absolute silence. Ibarra held his blade in a convulsive grasp. Then the struggle seemed to end, and the young man’s head appeared. He was saluted with joyous cries. He climbed the platform, holding in one hand an

end of the rope. Then he pulled with [86]all his strength, and the monster came in view. The rope was round its neck and the fore part of its body; it was large, and on its back could be seen green moss—to a crocodile what white hair is to man. It bellowed like an ox, beat the reeds with its tail, crouched, and opened its jaws, black and terrifying, showing its long and saw-like teeth. No one thought of aiding the helmsman. When he had drawn the reptile out of the water he put his foot on it, closed with his robust hand the redoubtable jaws, and tried to tie the muzzle. The creature made a last effort, arched its body, beat about with its powerful tail, and escaping, plunged outside the enclosure into the lake, dragging its vanquisher after it. The helmsman was a dead man. A cry of horror escaped from every mouth. Like a flash, another body disappeared in the water. There scarce was time to see it was Ibarra's. If Maria Clara did not faint, it was that the natives of the Philippines do not yet know how.

The waters grew red. Then the young fisherman leaped in, his father followed him. But they had scarcely disappeared, when Ibarra and the helmsman came to the surface, clinging to the crocodile's body. Its white belly was lacerated, Ibarra's knife was in the gorge.

Many arms stretched out to help the two young men from the water. The mamas, hysterical, wept, laughed, and prayed. Ibarra was unharmed. The helmsman had a slight scratch on the arm.

"I owe you my life," said he to Ibarra, who was being wrapped in mantles and rugs.

"You are too intrepid," said Ibarra. "Another time do not tempt God."

"If you had not come back!" murmured Maria Clara, pale and trembling.

The ladies did not approve of going to the second baklad; [87]to their minds the day had begun ill; there could not fail to be other misfortunes; it were better to go home.
"But what misfortune have we had?" said Ibarra. "The crocodile alone has the right to complain."

At length the mamas were persuaded, and the barks took their course toward the second baklad.[88]
[Contents]

XX.
In the Woods.

There had not been much hope in this second baklad. Every one expected to find there the crocodile's mate; but the net always came up full. The fishing ended, the boats were turned toward the shore. There was the party of the townspeople whom Ibarra had invited to meet his guests of the morning, and lunch with them under improvised tents beside a brook, in the shade of the ancient trees of the wooded peninsula. Music was resounding in the place, and water sang in the kettles. The body of the crocodile, in tow of the boats, turned from side to side; sometimes presenting its belly, white and torn, sometimes its spotted back and mossy shoulders. Man, the favorite of nature, is little disturbed by his many fratricides.

The party dispersed, some going to the baths, some wandering among the trees. The silent young helmsman disappeared. A path with many windings crossed the thicket of the wood and led to the upper course of the warm brook, formed from some of the many thermal springs on the flanks of the Makiling. Along the banks of the stream grew wood flowers, many of which have no Latin names, but are none the less known to golden bugs, to butterflies, shaded, jewelled, and bronzed, and to thousands of coleopters powdered with gold and gleaming with facets of steel. The hum of these insects, the song of birds, or the dry sound of dead branches catching in their fall, alone broke the mysterious silence. Suddenly the tones of fresh, young voices [89]were added to the wood notes. They seemed to come down the brook.

"We shall see if I find a nest!" said a sweet and resonant voice. "I should like to see him without his seeing me. I should like to follow him everywhere."

"I don't believe in heron's nests," said another voice; "but if I were in love, I should know how at once to see and to be invisible."

It was Maria Clara, Victoria, and Sinang walking in the brook. Their eyes were on the water, where they were searching for the mysterious nest. In blouses striped with dainty colors, their full bath skirts wet to the knees, outlining the graceful curves of their bodies, they moved along, seeking the impossible, meanwhile picking flowers along the banks. Soon the little

stream bent its course, and the tall reeds hid the charming trio and cut off the sound of their voices.

A little farther on, in the middle of the stream, was a sort of bath, well enclosed, its roof of leafy bamboo; palm leaves, flowers, and streamers decked its sides. From here, too, came girls' voices. Farther on was a bamboo bridge, and beyond that the men were bathing, while a multitude of servants were busy plucking fowls, washing rice, roasting pigs. In the clearing on the opposite bank a group of men and women had formed under a great canvas roof, attached in part to the branches of the ancient trees, in part to pickets. There chatted the curate, the alférez, the vicar, the gobernadorcillo, the lieutenant, all the chief men of the town, including the famous orator, Captain Basilio, father of Sinang and opponent of Don Rafael Ibarra in a lawsuit not yet ended.

"We dispute a point at law," Crisóstomo had said in inviting him, "but to dispute is not to be enemies," and the famous orator had accepted the invitation.[90]
Bottles of lemonade were opened and green cocoanut shells were broken, so that those who came from the baths might drink the fresh water; the girls were given wreaths of ylang-ylang and roses to perfume their unbound hair.

The lunch hour came. The curate, the alférez, the gobernadorcillo, some captains, and the lieutenant sat at a table with Ibarra. The mamas allowed no men at the table with the girls.

"Have you learned anything, señor alférez, about the criminal who attacked Brother Dámaso?" said Brother Salvi.

"Of what criminal are you speaking?" asked the alférez, looking at the father over his glass of wine.

"What? Why, the one who attacked Brother Dámaso on the highway day before yesterday."

"Father Dámaso has been attacked?" asked several voices.

"Yes; he is in bed yet. It is thought the maker of the assault is Elias, the one who threw you into the swamp some time ago, señor alférez."

The alférez reddened with shame, if it were not from emptying his glass of wine.

“But I supposed you were informed,” the curate went on; “I said to myself that the alférez of the Municipal Guard——”

The officer bit his lip.

At that moment a woman, pale, thin, miserably dressed, appeared, like a phantom, in the midst of the feast.

“Give the poor woman something to eat,” said the ladies.

She kept on toward the table where the curate was seated. He turned, recognized her, and the knife fell from his hand.

“Give the woman something to eat,” ordered Ibarra.

“The night is dark and the children are gone,” murmured the poor woman. But at sight of the alférez she [91]became frightened and ran, disappearing among the trees.
“Who is it?” demanded several voices.

“Isn’t her name Sisa?” asked Ibarra with interest.

“Your soldiers arrested her,” said the lieutenant to the alférez, with some bitterness; “they brought her all the way across the pueblo for some story about her sons that nobody could clear up.”

“What!” demanded the alférez, turning to the curate. “It is perhaps the mother of your sacristans?”

The curate nodded assent.

“They have disappeared, and there hasn’t been the slightest effort to find them,” said Don Filipo severely, looking at the gobernadorcillo, who lowered his eyes.

“Bring back the woman,” Crisóstomo ordered his servants.

“They have disappeared, did you say?” demanded the alférez. “Your sacristans have disappeared, Father Salvi?”

The curate emptied his glass and made another affirmative sign.

“Ho, ho! father,” cried the alférez with a mocking laugh, rejoiced at the prospect of revenge. “Your reverence loses a few pesos, and my sergeant is routed out to find them; your two sacristans disappear, your reverence says nothing; and you also, señor gobernadorcillo, you also——”

He did not finish, but broke off laughing, and buried his spoon in the red flesh of a papaw.

The curate began with some confusion:

“I was responsible for the money.”

“Excellent reply, reverend pastor of souls!” interrupted the alférez, his mouth full. “Excellent reply, holy man!”

Ibarra was on the point of interfering, but the priest recovered himself.[92] “Do you know, señor alférez,” he asked, “what is said about the disappearance of these children? No? Then ask your soldiers.”

“What!” cried the alférez, thus challenged, abandoning his mocking tone.

“They say that on the night when they disappeared shots were heard in the pueblo.”

“Shots?” repeated the alférez, looking at the faces around him. There were several signs of assent.

Brother Salvi went on with a sarcastic smile:

“Come! I see that you do not know how to arrest criminals, that you are unaware of what your soldiers do, but that you are ready to turn yourself into a preacher and teach others their duty.”

“Señores,” interrupted Ibarra, seeing the alférez grow pale, “I wish to know what you think of a project I’ve formed. I should like to give the mother into the care of a good physician. I’ve promised the father to try to find his children.”

The return of the servants without Sisa gave a new turn to the conversation. The luncheon was finished. While the tea and coffee were being served the guests separated into groups, the elders to play cards or chess, while the

girls, curious to learn their destiny, posed questions to the “Wheel of Fortune.”

“Come, Señor Ibarra!” cried Captain Basilio, a little gayer than usual; “we’ve had a case in court for fifteen years and no judge is able to solve it; let’s see if we cannot end it at chess.”

“In a moment, with great pleasure,” said Ibarra; “the alférez is leaving us.”

As soon as the officer had gone the men grouped around the two players. It was to be an interesting game. The elder ladies meanwhile had surrounded the curate, to talk [93]with him of the things of religion; but Brother Salvi seemed to judge the time unfitting and made but vague replies, his rather irritated glance being directed almost everywhere except toward his questioners.
The chess players began with much solemnity.

“If the game is a tie, the affair is forgotten!” said Ibarra.

In the midst of the play he received a despatch. His eyes shone and he became pale, but he put the message in his pocket without opening it.

“Check!” he cried. Captain Basilio had no recourse but to hide his king behind the queen.

“Check!” said Ibarra, threatening with his castle.

Captain Basilio asked a moment to reflect.

“Willingly,” said Ibarra; “I, too, should like a moment,” and excusing himself he went toward the group round the “Wheel of Fortune.”

Iday had the disc on which were the forty-eight questions, Albino the book of replies.

“Ask something,” they all cried to Ibarra, as he came up. “The one who has the best answer is to receive a present from the others.”

“And who has had the best so far?”

“Maria Clara!” cried Sinang. “We made her ask whether her lover is constant and true, and the book said——”

But Maria, all blushes, put her hand over Sinang's mouth.

"Give me the 'Wheel' then," said Crisóstomo, smiling. And he asked:

"Shall I succeed in my present undertaking?"

"What a stupid question!" pouted Sinang.

The corresponding answer was found in the book. "'Dreams are dreams,'" read Albino.[94]
Ibarra brought out his telegram and opened it, trembling.

"This time your wheel lies!" he cried. "Read!"

"'Project for school approved.' What does that mean?" they asked.

"This is my present," said he, giving the despatch to Maria Clara. "I'm to build a school in the pueblo; the school is my offering." And the young fellow ran back to his game of chess.

After making this present to his fiancée, Ibarra was so happy that he played without reflection, and, thanks to his many false moves, the captain re-established himself, and the game was a draw. The two men shook hands with effusion.

While they were thus making an end of the long and tedious suit, the sudden appearance of a sergeant and four armed guards, bayonets fixed, broke rudely in upon the merry-makers.

"Whoever stirs is a dead man!" cried the sergeant.

In spite of this bluster, Ibarra went up to him and asked what he wanted.

"We want a criminal named Elias, who was your helmsman this morning," replied the officer, still threatening.

"A criminal? The helmsman? You must be mistaken."

"No, señor, this Elias is accused of having raised his hand against a priest. You admit questionable people to your fêtes."

Ibarra looked him over from head to foot and replied with great coldness.

“I am in no way accountable to you for my actions. Every one is welcome at my fêtes.” And he turned away.

The sergeant, finding he was making no headway, ordered his men to search on all sides. They had the helmsman’s description on paper.

“Notice that this description answers well for nine-tenths [95]of the natives,” said Don Filipo; “see that you make no mistakes!”
Quiet came back little by little. There were no end of questions.

“So this is the Elias who threw the alférez into the swamp,” said Léon.

“He’s a tulisane then?” asked Victoria, trembling.

“I think not, for I know that he once fought against the tulisanes.”

“He hasn’t the face of a criminal,” said Sinang.

“No; but his face is very sad,” said Maria. “I did not see him smile all the morning.”

The day was ending, and in the last rays of the setting sun everybody left the wood, passing in silence the tomb of Ibarra’s ancestor. Farther on conversation again became animated, gay, full of warmth, under these branches little used to merry-making. But the trees appeared sad, and the swaying bindweed seemed to say: “Adieu, youth! Adieu, dream of a day!”[96]
[Contents]

XXI.
With the Philosopher.

The next morning, Juan Crisóstomo Ibarra, after visiting his land, turned his horse toward old Tasio's.

Complete quiet reigned in the old man's garden; scarcely did the swallows make a sound as they flew round the roof. The old walls of the house were mossy, and ivy framed the windows. It seemed the abode of silence.

Ibarra tied his horse, crossed the neat garden, almost on tiptoe, and entered the open door. He found the old man in his study, surrounded by his collections of insects and leaves, his maps, manuscript, and books. He was writing, and so absorbed in his work that he did not notice the entrance of Ibarra until the young man, loath to disturb him, was leaving as quietly as he had come.

"What! you were there?" he cried, looking at Crisóstomo with a certain astonishment.

"Don't disturb yourself; I see you are busy——"

"I was writing a little, but it is not at all pressing. Can I be of service to you?"

"Of great service," said Ibarra, approaching; "but—you are deciphering hieroglyphics!" he exclaimed in surprise, catching sight of the old man's work.

"No, I'm writing in hieroglyphics."

"Writing in hieroglyphics? And why?" demanded the young man, doubting his senses.

"So that no one can read me."

Ibarra looked at him attentively, wondering if he were not a little mad after all.[97]
"And why do you write if you do not wish to be read?"

“I write not for this generation, but for future ages. If the men of to-day could read my books, they would burn them; the generation that deciphers these characters will understand, and will say: ‘Our ancestors did not all sleep.’ But you have something to ask of me, and we are talking of other things.”

Ibarra drew out some papers.

“I know,” he said, “that my father greatly valued your advice, and I have come to ask it for myself.”

And he briefly explained his project for the school, unrolling before the stupefied philosopher plans sent from Manila. “Whom shall I consult first, in the pueblo, whose support will avail me most? You know them all, I am almost a stranger.”

Old Tasio examined with tearful eyes the drawings before him.

“You are going to realize my dream,” he said, greatly moved; “the dream of a poor fool. And now the first advice I give you is never to ask advice of me.”

Ibarra looked at him in surprise.

“Because, if you do,” he continued with bitter irony, “all sensible people will take you for a fool, too. For all sensible people think those who differ with them fools; they think me one, and I am grateful for it, because the day they see in me a reasonable being woe is me! That day I shall lose the little liberty I now enjoy at the expense of my reputation. The gobernadorcillo passes with them for a wise man because having learned nothing but to serve chocolate and to suffer the caprices of Brother Dámaso, he is now rich and has the right to trouble the life of his fellow-citizens. ‘There is a man of talent!’ says the crowd. ‘He has sprung from nothing to greatness.’ But perhaps [98]I am really the fool and they are the wise men. Who can say?”
And the old man shook his head as though to dismiss an unwelcome thought.

“The second thing I advise is to consult the curate, the gobernadorcillo, all the people of position in the pueblo. They will give you bad advice,

unintelligible, useless. But to ask advice is not to follow it. All you need is to make it understood that you are working in accordance with their ideas."

Ibarra reflected, then replied:

"No doubt your counsel is good, but it is very hard to take. May I not offer my own ideas to the light of day? Cannot the good make its way anywhere? Has truth need of the dross of error?"

"No one likes the naked truth," replied the old man. "It is good in theory, easy in the ideal world of which youth dreams. You say you are a stranger to your country; I believe it. The day that you arrived here, you began by wounding the self-esteem of a priest. God grant this seemingly small thing has not decided your future. If it has, all your efforts will break against the convent walls, without disturbing the monk, swaying his girdle, or making his robe tremble. The alcalde, under one pretext or another, will deny you to-morrow what he grants you to-day; not a mother will let her child go to your school, and the result of all your efforts will be simply negative."

"I cannot help feeling your fears exaggerated," said Ibarra. "In spite of all you say, I cannot believe in this power; but even admitting it to be so great, the most intelligent of the people would be on my side, and also the Government, which is animated by the best intentions, and wishes the veritable good of the Philippines."

"The Government! the Government!" murmured the [99]philosopher, raising his eyes. "However great its desire to better the country, however generous may have been the spirit of the Catholic kings, the Government sees, hears, judges nothing more than the curate or the provincial gives it to see, hear, or judge. The Government is convinced that its tranquillity comes through the monks; that if it is upheld, it is because they uphold it; that if it live, is it because they consent to let it, and that the day when they fail it, it will fall like a manikin that has lost its base. The monks hold the Government in hand by threatening a revolt of the people they control; the people, by displaying the power of the Government. So long as the Government has not an understanding with the country, it will not free itself from this tutelage. The Government looks to no vigorous future; it's an arm, the head is the convent. Through its inertia, it allows itself to be dragged from abyss

to abyss; its existence is no more than a shadow. Compare our system of government with the systems of countries you have visited——”
“Oh!” interrupted Ibarra, “that is going far. Let us be satisfied that, thanks to religion and the humanity of our rulers, our people do not complain, do not suffer like those of other countries.”

“The people do not complain because they have no voice; if they don’t revolt, it is because they are lethargic; if you say they do not suffer, it is because you have not seen their heart’s blood. But the day will come when you will see and hear. Then woe to those who base their strength on ignorance and fanaticism; woe to those who govern through falsehood, and work in the night, thinking that all sleep! When the sun’s light shows the sham of all these phantoms, there will be a frightful reaction; all this strength conserved for centuries, all this poison distilled drop by drop, all these sighs strangled, will find the light and the [100]air. Who pay these accounts which the people from time to time present, and which History preserves for us in its bloody pages?”
“God will never permit such a day to come!” replied Ibarra, impressed in spite of himself. “The Filipinos are religious, and they love Spain. There are abuses, yes, but Spain is preparing reforms to correct them; her projects are now ripening.”

“I know; but the reforms which come from the head are annulled lower down, thanks to the greedy desire of officials to enrich themselves in a short time, and to the ignorance of the people, who accept everything. Abuses are not to be corrected by royal decrees, not where the liberty of speech, which permits the denunciation of petty tyrants, does not exist. Projects remain projects; abuses, abuses. Moreover, if by chance some one coming to occupy an office begins to show high and generous ideas, immediately he hears on all sides—while to his back he is held a fool: ‘Your Excellency does not know the country, Your Excellency does not know the character of the Indians, Your Excellency will ruin them, Your Excellency will do well to consult this one and that one,’ and so forth, and so on. And as in truth His Excellency does not know the country, which hitherto he had supposed to be in America, and since, like all men, he has his faults and weaknesses, he allows himself to be convinced. Don’t ask for miracles; don’t ask that he who comes here a stranger to make his fortune should interest himself in the welfare of the country. What does it mean to him, the gratitude or the

execration of a people he does not know, among whom he has neither attachments nor hopes? To make glory sweet to us, its plaudits must resound in the ears of those we love, in the atmosphere of our home, of the country that is to preserve our ashes; we wish this glory seated on our tomb, to warm a little with [101]its rays the cold of death, to keep us from being reduced to nothingness quite. But we wander from the question."
"It is true I did not come to argue this point; I came to ask advice, and you tell me to bow before grotesque idols."

"Yes, and I repeat it; you must either lower your head or lose it."

"'Lower my head or lose it!'" repeated Ibarra, thoughtful. "The dilemma is hard. Is it impossible to reconcile love of my country and love of Spain? Must one abase himself to be a good Christian; prostitute his conscience to achieve a good work? I love my country; I love Spain; I am a Catholic, and keep pure the faith of my fathers; but I see in all this no reason for delivering myself into the hands of my enemies."

"But the field where you would sow is in the keeping of your enemies. You must begin by kissing the hand which——"

Ibarra did not let him finish.

"Kiss their hands! You forget that among them are those who killed my father and tore his body from the grave; but I, his son, do not forget, and if I do not avenge, it is because of my allegiance to religion!"

The old philosopher lowered his eyes.

"Señor Ibarra," he said slowly, "if you are going to keep the remembrance of these things, things I cannot counsel you to forget, abandon this enterprise and find some other means of benefiting your compatriots. This work demands another man."

Ibarra saw the force of these words, but he could not give up his project. The remembrance of Maria Clara was in his heart; he must make good his offering to her.

"If I go on, does your experience suggest nothing but this hard road?" he asked in a low voice.

Old Tasio took his arm and led him to the window. A [102]fresh breeze was blowing, courier of the north wind. Below lay the garden.
"Why must we do as does that slender stalk, charged with buds and blossoms?" said the philosopher, pointing out a superb rose-tree. "The wind makes it tremble, and it bends, as if to hide its precious charge. If the stalk stood rigid, it would break, the wind would scatter the flowers, and the buds would die without opening. The gust of wind passed, the stalk rises again, proudly wearing her treasure. Who accuses her for having bowed to necessity? To lower the head when a ball whistles is not cowardice. What is reprehensible is defying the shot, to fall and rise no more."

"And will this sacrifice bear the fruit I seek? Will they have faith in me? Can the priest forget his own offence? Will they sincerely aid me to spread that instruction which is sure to dispute with the convents the wealth of the country? Might they not feign friendship, simulate protection, and, underneath, wound my enterprise in the heel, that it fall more promptly than if attacked face to face? Admitting your views, one might expect anything."

The old man reflected, then he said:

"If this happens, if the enterprise fails, you will have the consolation of having done what you could. Something will have been gained. Your example will embolden others, who fear only to commence."

Ibarra weighed these reasonings, examined the situation, and saw that with all his pessimism the old man was right.

"I believe you," he said, grasping his hand. "It was not in vain that I came to you for counsel. I will go straight to the curate, who, after all, may be a fair-minded man. They are not all like the persecutor of my father. I go with faith in God and man."

He took leave of Tasio, mounted, and rode away, followed [103]by the regard of the pessimistic old philosopher, who stood muttering to himself:
"We shall see, we shall see how the fates unroll the drama begun in the cemetery!"

This time the wise Tasio was wrong; the drama had begun long before.[104]
[Contents]

XXII.
The Meeting at the Town Hall.

It was a room of twelve or fifteen by eight or ten yards. The whitewashed walls were covered with charcoal drawings, more or less ugly, more or less decent. In the corner were a dozen old shot-guns and some rusty swords, the arms of the cuadrilleros.

At one end, draped with soiled red curtains, was a portrait of His Majesty the King, and on the platform underneath an old fauteuil opened its worn arms; before this was a great table, daubed with ink, carved and cut with inscriptions and monograms, like the tables of a German students' inn. Lame chairs and tottering benches completed the furniture.

In this hall meetings were held, courts sat, tortures were inflicted. At the moment the authorities of the pueblo and its vicinity were met there. The party of the old did not mingle with the party of the young; the two represented the Conservatives and Liberals.

"My friends," Don Filipo, the chief of the Liberals, was saying to a little group, "we shall vanquish the old men this time; I'm going to present their plan myself, with exaggerations, you may imagine."

"What are you saying?" demanded his surprised auditors.

"Listen," said Don Filipo. "This morning I ran across old Tasio. He said to me: 'Your enemies are more opposed to your person than to your ideas. Is there something you [105]don't want to have go through? Propose it yourself. If it's as desirable as a mitre, they will reject it. Then let the most modest young fellow among you present what you really want. To humiliate you, your enemies will help to carry it.' Hush! Keep the secret."
The gobernadorcillo had come in. Conversation ceased, all took places, and silence reigned.

The captain, as the gobernadorcillo is called, sat down in the chair under the king's portrait. His look was harried. He coughed, passed his hand over his cranium, coughed again, and at length began in a failing voice:

“Señores, I’ve taken the risk of convening you all—hem, hem!—because we are to celebrate, the twelfth of this month, the feast of our patron, San Diego—hem, hem!”

At this point of his discourse a cough, dry and regular, reduced him to silence.

Then from among the elders arose Captain Basilio:

“Will your honors permit me,” said he, “to speak a word under these interesting circumstances? I speak first, though many of those present have more right than I, but the things I have to say are of such importance that they should neither be left aside nor said last, and for that reason I wish to speak first, to give them the place they merit. Your honors will, then, permit me to speak first in this assembly, where I see very distinguished people, like the señor, the present gobernadorcillo; his predecessor, my distinguished friend, Don Valentine; his other predecessor, Don Julio; our renowned captain of the cuadrilleros, Don Melchior, and so many others, whom, for brevity, I will not mention, and whom you see here present. I entreat your honors to give me the floor before any one else speaks. Am I happy enough to have the assembly accede to my humble request?” And the speaker bowed respectfully, half smiling.

“You may speak, we shall hear you with pleasure!” cried [106]his flattering friends, who held him a great orator. The old men hemmed with satisfaction and rubbed their hands.
Captain Basilio wiped the sweat from his brow and continued:

“Since your honors have been so kind and complaisant toward my humble self as to grant me the right of speech before all others here present, I shall profit by this permission, so generously accorded, and I shall speak. I imagine in my imagination that I find myself in the midst of the very venerable Roman senate—senatus populusque Romanus, as we said in those good old times which, unhappily for humanity, will never come back, —and I will ask the patres conscripti—as the sage Cicero would say if he were in my place—I would ask them, since time presses, and time is golden as Solomon says, that in this important matter each one give his opinion clearly, briefly, and simply. I have done.”

And satisfied with himself and with the attention of the house the orator sat down, not without directing toward his friends a look which plainly said: “Ha! Did I speak well? Ha!”

“Now the floor belongs to any one who—hem!” said the gobernadorcillo, without being able to finish his sentence.

To judge by the general silence, no one wished to be one of the patres conscripti. Don Filipo profited thereby and rose.

The Conservatives looked at one another with significant nods and gestures.

“Señores, I will present my project for the fête,” he began.

“We cannot accept it!” said an uncompromising Conservative.

“We vote against it!” cried another adversary.

Don Filipo could not repress a smile.[107]
“We have a budget of 3,500 pesos. With this sum we can assure a fête that will surpass any we have yet seen in our own province or in others.”

There were cries of “Impossible!” Such a pueblo spent 4,000 pesos; another, 5,000!

“Listen, señores, and you will be convinced,” continued Don Filipo, unshaken. “I propose that in the middle of the plaza we erect a grand theatre, costing 150 pesos.”

“Not enough! Say 160!”

“Observe, gentlemen, 200 pesos for the theatre. I propose that arrangements be made with the Comedy Company of Tondo for seven representations, seven consecutive evenings, at 200 pesos an evening. Seven representations, at 200 pesos each, makes 1,400 pesos. Observe, señor director, 1,400 pesos.”

Old and young looked at one another in surprise. Only those in the secret remained unmoved.

“I further propose magnificent fireworks; not those little rockets and crackers that amuse nobody but children and old maids, but great bombs, colossal rockets. I propose, then, 200 bombs at two pesos each, and 200

rockets at the same price. Observe, señores, 1,000 pesos for bombs and ____"

The Conservatives could not contain themselves. They got up and conferred with one another.

"And further, to show our neighbors that we are not people who must count their expenditures, I propose, first, four great preachers for the two feast days; second, that each day we throw into the lake 200 roasted fowls, 100 stuffed capons, and 50 sucking pigs, as did Sylla, contemporary of Cicero, to whom Captain Basilio alluded."

"That's it! Like Sylla!" repeated Captain Basilio, flattered.

The astonishment grew.[108]
"As many rich people will come to the fêtes, each bringing thousands of pesos and his best cocks, I propose fifteen days of the gallera, the liberty of open gaming houses——"

Cries rising from all sides drowned his voice; there was a veritable tumult. The gobernadorcillo, more crushed than ever, did nothing to quell it; he waited for order to establish itself.

Happily Captain Valentine, most moderate of the Conservatives, rose and said:

"What the lieutenant proposes seems to us extravagant. So many bombs and so much comedy could only be proposed by a young man, like the lieutenant, who could pass all his evenings at the theatre and hear countless detonations without becoming deaf. And what of these fowls thrown into the lake? Why should we imitate Sylla and the Romans? Did they ever invite us to their fêtes? I'm an old man, and I've never received any summons from them!"

"The Romans live at Rome with the Pope," Captain Basilio whispered.

This did not disconcert Don Valentine.

"At all events," he went on, "the project is inadmissible, impossible; it's a folly!"

Don Filipo must needs retire his project.

Satisfied with the defeat of their enemy, the Conservatives were not displeased to see another young man rise, the municipal head of a group of fifty or sixty families, known as a balangay.

He modestly excused himself for speaking. With delicate blandishments he referred to the "ideas so elegantly expressed by Captain Basilio," upon which the delighted captain made signs to show him how to gesture and to change position: then he unfolded his project: to have something absolutely new, and to spend the 3,500 pesos in such a way as to benefit their own province.[109]
"That's it!" interrupted the young men; "that's what we want!"

What did they care about seeing the King of Bohemia cut off the heads of his daughters! They were neither kings nor barbarians, and if they did such things themselves, would be hung high on the field of Bagumbayan. He proposed that two native plays be given which dealt with the manners of the times. There were two he had in mind, works of their best writers. They demanded only native costumes, and could be played by amateurs of talent, of whom the province had no lack.

"A good idea!" some of the Conservatives began to murmur.

"I'll pay for the theatre!" cried Captain Basilio, with enthusiasm.

"Accepted! Accepted!" cried numerous voices. The young man went on:

"A part of the money taken at the theatre might be distributed in prizes: to the best pupil in the school, the best shepherd, the best fisherman. We might have boat races, and games, and fireworks, of course."

Almost all were agreed, though some talked about "innovations."

When silence was established, only the decision of the gobernadorcillo was wanting.

The poor man passed his hand across his forehead, he fidgeted, he perspired; finally he stammered, lowering his eyes:

"I also; I approve; but, hem!"

The assembly listened in silence.

“But——” demanded Captain Basilio.

“I approve entirely,” repeated the functionary, “that is to say, I do not approve; I say yes, but——”

He rubbed his eyes with the back of his hand.[110]
“But,” continued the unhappy man, coming to the point at last, “the curate wants something else.”

“Is the curate to pay for the festival? Has he given even a cuarto?” cried a penetrating voice.

Every one turned. It was Tasio. The lieutenant remained immovable, his eyes on the gobernadorcillo.

“And what does the curate want?” demanded Don Basilio.

“The curate wants six processions, three sermons, three solemn masses, and if any money is left, a comedy with songs between the acts.”

“But we don’t want it!” cried the young men and some of their elders.

“The curate wishes it,” repeated the gobernadorcillo, “and I’ve promised that his wishes shall be carried out.”

“Then why did you call us together?” asked one, impatient.

“Why didn’t you say so in the beginning?” demanded another.

“I wished to, señores, but, Captain Basilio, I did not have a chance. We must obey the curate!”

“We must obey!” repeated some of the Conservatives.

Don Filipo approached the gobernadorcillo and said bitterly:

“I sacrificed my pride in a good cause; you sacrifice your manliness in a bad one; you spoil every good thing that might be done!”

Ibarra said to the schoolmaster:

“Have you any commission for the capital? I leave immediately.”

On the way home the old philosopher said to Don Filipo, who was cursing his fate:

“The fault is ours. You didn’t protest when they gave you a slave for mayor, and I, fool that I am, forgot about him!”[111]
[Contents]

XXIII.
The Eve of the Fête.

It is the 10th of November, the eve of the fête. The pueblo of San Diego is stirred by an incredible activity; in the houses, the streets, the church, the gallera, all is unwonted movement. From windows flags and rugs are hanging; the air, resounding with bombs and music, seems saturated with gayety. Inside on little tables covered with bordered cloths the dalaga arranges in jars of tinted crystal the confitures made from the native fruits. Servants come and go; orders, whispers, comments, conjectures are everywhere. And all this activity and labor are for guests as often unknown as known; the stranger, the friend, the Filipino, the Spaniard, the rich man, the poor man, will be equally fortunate; and no one will ask his gratitude, nor even demand that he speak well of his host till the end of his dinner.

The red covers which all the year protect the lamps are taken off, and the swinging prisms and crystal pendants strike out harmonies from one another and throw dancing rainbow colors on the white walls. The glass globes, precious heirlooms, are rubbed and polished; the dainty handiwork of the young girls of the house is brought out. Floors shine like mirrors, curtains of piña or silk jusi ornament the doors, and in the windows hang lanterns of crystal or of colored paper. The vases on the Chinese pedestals are heaped with flowers, the saints themselves in their reliquaries are dusted and wreathed with blossoms.[112]

At intervals along the streets rise graceful arches of reed; around the parvis of the church is the costly covered passageway, supported by trunks of bamboos, under which the procession is to pass, and in the centre of the plaza rises the platform of the theatre, with its stage of reed, of nipa, or of wood. The native pyrotechnician, who learns his art from no one knows what master, is getting ready his castles, balloons, and fiery wheels; all the bells of the pueblo are ringing gaily. There are sounds of music in the distance, and the gamins run to meet the bands and give them escort. In comes the fanfare with spirited marches, followed by the ragged and half-naked urchins, who, the moment a number is ended, know it by heart, hum it, whistle it with wonderful accuracy, and are ready to pass judgment on it.

Meanwhile the people of the mountains, the kasamà, in gala dress, bring down to the rich of the pueblo wild game and fruits, and the rarest plants of the woods, the biga, with its great leaves, and the tikas-tikas, whose flaming flowers will ornament the doorways of the houses. And from all sides, in all sorts of vehicles, arrive the guests, known and unknown, many bringing with them their best cocks and sacks of gold to risk in the gallera, or on the green cloth.

“The alférez has fifty pesos a night,” a little plump man is murmuring in the ears of his guests. “Captain Tiago will hold the bank; Captain Joaquin brings eighteen thousand. There will be liam-pô; the Chinese Carlo puts up the game, with a capital of ten thousand. Sporting men are coming from Lipa and Batanzos and Santa Cruz. There will be big play! big play!—but will you take chocolate?—Captain Tiago won’t fleece us this year as he did last; and how is your family?”

“Very well, very well, thank you! And Father Dámaso?”

“The father will preach in the morning and be with us at the games in the evening.”[113]
“He’s out of danger now?”

“Without question! Ah, it’s the Chinese who will let their hands go!” And in dumb show the little man counted money with his hands.

But the greatest animation of all was at the outskirts of the crowd, around a sort of platform a few paces from the home of Ibarra. Pulleys creaked, cries went up, one heard the metallic ring of stone-cutting, of nail-driving; a band of workmen were opening a long, deep trench; others were placing in line great stones from the quarries of the pueblo, emptying carts, dumping sand, placing capstans.

“This way! That’s it! Quick about it!” a little old man of intelligent and animated face was crying. It was the foreman, Señor Juan, architect, mason, carpenter, metalworker, stonecutter, and on occasions sculptor. To each stranger he repeated what he had already said a thousand times.

“Do you know what we are going to build? A model school, like those of Germany, and even better. The plans were traced by Señor R——. I direct the work. Yes, señor, you see it is to be a palace with two wings, one for the

boys, the other for the girls. Here in the centre will be a great garden with three fountains, and at the sides little gardens for the children to cultivate plants. That great space you see there is for playgrounds. It will be magnificent!" And the Señor Juan rubbed his hands, thinking of his fame to come. Soothed by its contemplation, he went back and forth, passing everything in review.

"That's too much wood for a crane," he said to a Mongol, who was directing a part of the work. "The three beams that make the tripod and the three joining them would be enough for me."

"But not for me," replied the Mongol, with a peculiar smile, "the more ornament, the more imposing the effect. [114]You will see! I shall trim it, too, with wreaths and streamers. You will say in the end that you were right to give the work into my hands, and Señor Ibarra will have nothing left to desire."
The man smiled still, and Señor Juan laughed and threw back his head.

In truth, Ibarra's project had found an echo almost everywhere. The curate had asked to be a patron and to bless the cornerstone, a ceremony that was to take place the last day of the fête, and to be one of its chief solemnities. One of the most conservative papers of Manila had dedicated to Ibarra on its first page an article entitled, "Imitate Him!" He was therein called "the young and rich capitalist, already a marked man," "the distinguished philanthropist," "the Spanish Filipino," and so forth. The students who had come from Manila for the fête were full of admiration for Ibarra, and ready to take him for their model. But, as almost always when we try to imitate a man who towers above the crowd, we ape his weaknesses, if not his faults, many of these admirers of Crisóstomo's held rigorously to the tie of his cravat, or the shape of his collar; almost all to the number of buttons on his vest. Even Captain Tiago burned with generous emulation, and asked himself if he ought not to build a convent.

The dark presentiments of old Tasio seemed dissipated. When Ibarra said so to him, the old pessimist replied: "Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes."

Toward evening Captain Tiago arrived from Manila, bringing Maria Clara, in honor of the fête, a beautiful reliquary of gold, set with emeralds and diamonds, enshrining a splinter from the fishing-boat of St. Peter. Scarcely

had he come when a party of Maria's friends came to take her out to see the streets.

"Go," said Captain Tiago, "but come back soon. [115]Father Dámaso, you know, is to dine with us. You, too, Crisóstomo, must join us."
"With the greatest pleasure," stammered Ibarra, avoiding Maria Clara's eyes, "if I did not feel that I must be at home to receive whoever may come."

"Bring your friends here; there is always room at my table," said Captain Tiago, somewhat coldly. "I wish Father Dámaso and you to come to an understanding."

"There is yet time," said Ibarra, forcing a smile.

As they descended to the street, Aunt Isabel following, people moved aside to let them pass. Maria Clara was a vision of loveliness: her pallor had disappeared, and if her eyes remained pensive, her mouth seemed to know only smiles. With the amiability characteristic of happy young womanhood she saluted the people she had known as a child, and they smiled back their admiration. In these few days of freedom she had regained the frank friendliness, the gracious speech, which seemed to have slumbered inside the narrow walls of her convent. She felt a new, intense life within her, and everything without seemed good and beautiful. She showed her love for Ibarra with that maiden sweetness which comes from pure thoughts and knows no reason for false blushes.

At regular intervals in the streets were kindled great clustered lights with bamboo supports, like candelabra. People were beginning to illuminate their houses, and through the open windows one could see the guests moving about in the radiance among the flowers to the music of harp, piano, or orchestra. Outside, in gala costume, native or European, Chinese, Spaniards, and Filipinos were moving in all directions, escaping with difficulty the crush of carriages and calashes.

When the party reached Captain Basilio's house, Sinang saw them, and ran down the steps.[116]
"Come up till I'm ready to go out with you," she said. "I'm weary of all these strangers who talk of nothing but cocks and cards."

The house was full of people. Many came up to greet Crisóstomo, and all admired Maria Clara. “Beautiful as the Virgin!” the old dames whispered, chewing their buyo.

Here they must take chocolate. As they were leaving, Captain Basilio said in Ibarra’s ear:

“Won’t you join us this evening? Father Dámaso is going to make up a little purse.”

Ibarra smiled and answered by a movement of the head, which might have meant anything.

Chatting and laughing, the merry party went on past the brilliantly illuminated houses. At length they came to one fast closed and dark. It was the home of the alférez. Maria was astonished.

“It’s that old sorceress. The Muse of the Municipal Guard, as Tasio calls her,” said Sinang. “Her house is in mourning because the people are gay.”

At a corner of the plaza, where a blind man was singing, an uncommon sight offered itself. A man stood there, miserably dressed, his head covered by a great salakot of palm leaves, which completely hid his face, though from its shadow two lights gleamed and went out fitfully. He was tall, and, from his figure, young. He pushed forward a basket, and after speaking some unintelligible words drew back and stood completely isolated. Women passing put fruit and rice into his basket, and at this he came forward a little, speaking what seemed to be his thanks.

Maria Clara felt the presence of some great suffering. “Who is it?” she asked Iday.

“It’s a leper. He lives outside the pueblo, near the Chinese cemetery; every one fears to go near him. If you [117]could see his cabin! The wind, the rain, and the sun must visit him as they like.”
“Poor man!” murmured Maria Clara, and hardly knowing what she did, she went up and put into the basket the reliquary her father had just given her.

“Maria!” exclaimed her friends.

“I had nothing else,” she said, forcing back the tears.

“What will he do with the reliquary? He can’t sell it! Nobody will touch it now! If only it could be eaten!” said Sinang.

But the leper went to the basket, took the glittering thing in his hands, fell on his knees, kissed it, and bent his head to the ground, uncovering humbly. Maria Clara turned her face to hide the tears.

As the leper knelt, a woman crept up and knelt beside him. By her long, loose hair and emaciated face the people recognized Sisa. The leper, feeling her touch, sprang up with a cry; but, to the horror of the crowd, she clung to his arm.

“Pray! Pray!” said she. “It is the Feast of the Dead! These lights are the souls of men. Pray for my sons!”

“Separate them! Separate them!” cried the crowd; but no one dared do it.

“Do you see the light in the tower? That is my son Basilio, ringing the bells. Do you see that other in the manse? That is my son Crispin; but I cannot go to them, because the curate is ill, and his money is lost. I carried the curate fruit from my garden. My garden was full of flowers, and I had two sons. I had a garden, I tended my flowers, and I had two sons.”

And leaving the leper she moved away, singing:

“I had a garden and flowers. I had two sons, a garden and flowers.”[118]
“What have you done for that poor woman?” Maria asked Ibarra.

“Nothing yet,” he replied, somewhat confused. “But don’t be troubled; the curate has promised to aid me.”

As they spoke, a soldier came dragging Sisa back, rather than leading her. She was resisting.

“Where are you taking her? What has she done?” asked Ibarra.

“What has she done? Didn’t you hear the noise she made?” said the guardian of public tranquillity.

The leper took up his basket and vanished. Maria Clara asked to go home. She had lost all her gayety. Her sadness increased when, arrived at her door, her fiancé refused to go in.

“It must be so to-night,” he said as he bade her good-by.

Maria, mounting the steps, thought how tiresome were fête days, when one must receive so many strangers.

The next evening a little perfumed note came to Ibarra by the hand of Andeng, Maria’s foster sister.

“Crisóstomo, for a whole day I have not seen you. They tell me you are ill. I have lighted two candles and prayed for you. I’m so tired of being asked to play and dance. I did not know there were so many tiresome people in the world. If Father Dámaso had not tried to amuse me with stories, I should have left them all and gone away to sleep. Write me how you are, and if I shall send papa to see you. I send you Andeng now to make your tea; she will do it better than your servants. If you don’t come to-morrow, I shall not go to the ceremony.

MARIA CLARA.”

XXIV.
In the Church.

The orchestras sounded the reveille at the first rays of the sun, waking with joyous airs the tired inhabitants of the pueblo.

It was the last day of the fête—indeed, the fête itself. Every one expected much more than on the eve, when the Brothers of the Sacred Rosary had had their sermon and procession; for the Brothers of the Third Order were more numerous, and counted on humiliating their rivals. The Chinese candle merchants had reaped a rich harvest.

Everybody put on his gala dress; all the jewels came out of their coffers; the fops and sporting men wore rows of diamond buttons on their shirt fronts, heavy gold chains, and white jipijapa hats, as the Indians call Panamas. No one but old Tasio was in everyday costume.

"You seem even sadder than usual," the lieutenant said to him. "Because we have so many reasons to weep, may we not laugh once in a while?"

"Yes, laugh, but not play the fool! It's the same insane orgy every year, the same waste of money when there's so much need and so much suffering! But I see! It's the orgy, the bacchanal, that is to still the lamentations of the poor!"

"You know I share your opinion," said Don Filipo, half serious, half laughing, "and that I defended it; but what can I do against the gobernadorcillo and the curate?"

"Resign!" cries the irate old man, leaving him.[120]
"Resign!" muttered Don Filipo, going on toward the church. "Resign? Yes, certainly, if my post were an honor and not a charge."

There was a crowd in the parvis, and men, women, and children in a stream were coming and going through the narrow doors of the church. The smell of powder mingled with that of flowers and incense. Rockets, bombs, and serpents made women run and scream and delighted the children. An orchestra was playing before the convent; bands accompanied dignitaries on their way to the church, or paraded the streets under innumerable floating

and dipping flags. Light and color distracted the eye, music and explosions the ear.

High mass was about to be celebrated. Among the congregation were to be the chief alcalde of the province and other Spanish notables; and last, the sermon would be given by Brother Dámaso, who had the greatest renown as a preacher.

The church was crammed. People were jostled, crushed, trampled on, and cried out at each encounter. From far they stretched their arms to dip their fingers in the holy water, but getting nearer, saw its color, and the hands retired. They scarcely breathed; the heat and atmosphere were insupportable; but the preacher was worth the endurance of all these miseries; besides, his sermon was to cost the pueblo two hundred and fifty pesos. Fans, hats, and handkerchiefs agitated the air; children cried, and gave the sacristans a hard enough task getting them out.

Ibarra was in a corner. Maria Clara knelt near the high altar, where the curate had reserved a place for her. Captain Tiago, in frock coat, sat on the bench of authorities, and the children, who did not know him, taking him for another gobernadorcillo, dared not go near him.

At length the alcalde arrived with his suite. He came [121]from the sacristy, and sat down in a splendid fauteuil, beneath which was spread a rich carpet. He was in full dress, and wore the cordon of Charles III., with four or five other decorations.
“Ha!” cried a countryman. “A citizen in fancy dress!”

“Imbecile!” replied his neighbor. “It’s Prince Villardo whom we saw last night in the play!” And the alcalde, in the character of giant-slayer, rose accordingly in the popular estimation.

Presently those seated arose, those sleeping awoke, the mass had begun. Brother Salvi celebrated, attended by two Augustins. At length came the long-looked-for moment of the sermon. The three priests sat down, the alcalde and other notables followed them, the music ceased. The people made themselves as comfortable as possible, those who had no benches sitting outright on the pavement, or arranging themselves tailor fashion.

Preceded by two sacristans and followed by another monk, who bore a great book, Father Dámaso made his way through the crowd. He disappeared a moment in the spiral staircase of the pulpit, then his great head reappeared and his herculean bust. He looked over his audience, and, the review terminated, said to his companion, hidden at his feet:

“Attention, brother!”

The monk opened his book.[122]
[Contents]

XXV.
The Sermon.

The first part of the sermon was to be in Castilian, the remainder in Tagalo. Brother Dámaso began slowly and in ordinary voice:

"*Et spiritum tuum bonum dedisti qui docevet eos, et manna tuum non prohibuisti ab ore eorum, et aquam dedisti eis in siti.* Words of the Lord spoken by the mouth of Esdras, Book II., chapter ix., verse 20.

"Most worshipful señor (to the alcalde), very reverend priests, brothers in Christ!"

Here an impressive pose and a new glance round the audience, then, his eyes on the alcalde, the father majestically extended his right hand toward the altar, slowly crossed his arms, without saying a word, and, passing from this calm to action, threw back his head, pointed toward the main entrance, and, impetuously cutting the air with the edge of his hand, began to speak in a voice strong, full, and resonant.

"Brilliant and splendid is the altar, wide the door, the air is the vehicle of the sacred word which shall spring from my lips. Hear, then, with the ears of the soul and the heart, that the words of the Lord may not fall on a stony ground, but that they may grow and shoot upward in the field of our seraphic father, St. Francis. You, sinners, captives of those Moors of the soul who infest the seas of the eternal life, in the doughty ships of the flesh and the world; you who row in the galleys of Satan, behold with reverent compunction him [123]who redeems souls from the captivity of the demon—the intrepid Gideon, the courageous David, the victorious Roland of Christianity! the celestial guard, more valiant than all the civil guards of past and future. (The alférez frowned.) Yes, Señor Alférez, more valiant and more powerful than all! This conqueror, who, without other weapon than a wooden cross, vanquished the eternal tulisanes of darkness, and would have utterly destroyed them were spirits not immortal. This marvel, this incredible phenomenon, is the blessed Diego of Alcala!"

The "rude Indians," as the correspondents say, fished out of this paragraph only the words civil guard, tulisane, San Diego, and San Francisco. They had noticed the grimace of the alférez and the militant gesture of the

preacher, and had from this deduced that the father was angry with the guard for not pursuing the tulisanes, and that San Diego and San Francisco had taken upon themselves to do it. They were enchanted, not doubting that, the tulisanes once dispersed, St. Francis would also destroy the municipal guard. Their attention, therefore, redoubled.

The monk continued so long his eulogy of San Diego that his auditors, not even excepting Captain Tiago, began to yawn a little. Then he reproached them with living like the Protestants and heretics, who respect not the ministers of God; like the Chinese, for which condemnation be upon them!

"What is he telling us, the Palé Lámaso?" murmured the Chinese Carlos, looking angrily at the preacher, who went on improvising a series of apostrophes and imprecations.

"You will die in impenitence, race of heretics! Your punishment is already being meted out to you in jails and prisons. The family and its women should flee you; rulers should destroy you. If you have a member that causeth you to offend, cut it off and cast it into the fire!"[124]
Brother Dámaso was nervous. He had forgotten his sermon and was improvising. Ibarra became restless; he looked about in search of some corner, but the church was full. Maria Clara no longer heard the sermon. She was analyzing a picture of the souls of the "Blessed in Purgatory."

In the improvisation the monk who played the part of prompter lost his place and skipped some paragraphs. The text returned to San Diego, and with a long series of exclamations and contrasts the father brought to a close the first part of his sermon.

The second part was entirely improvised; not that Brother Dámaso knew Tagalo better than Castilian; but, considering the natives of the province entirely ignorant of rhetoric, he did not mind making errors before them. Yet the second part of his discourse had for certain people graver consequences than the first.

He began with a "Maná capatir concristians," "My Christian brothers," followed by an avalanche of untranslatable phrases about the soul, sin, and the patron saint. Then he launched a new series of maledictions against lack of respect and growing irreligion. On this point he seemed to be inspired, and expressed himself with force and clearness. He spoke of sinners who

die in prison without confession or the sacraments; of accursed families, of petty students, and of toy philosophers.

Ibarra listened and understood. He kept a calm exterior, but his eyes turned toward the bench of magistrates. No one seemed to pay attention; as to the alcalde, he was asleep.

The inspiration of the preacher increased. He spoke of the early times when every Filipino encountering a priest uncovered, knelt, and kissed his hand. Now, he said, there were those who, because they had studied in Manila or in Europe, thought fit to shake the hand of a priest instead of kissing it.[125] But in spite of the cries and gestures of the orator, by this time many of his auditors slept, and few listened. Some of the devout would have wept over the sins of the ungodly, but nobody joined them, and they were forced to give it up. A man seated beside an old woman went so sound asleep that he fell over against her. The good woman took her slipper and tried to waken him, at the same time crying out:

“Get away! Savage, animal, demon, carabao!”

Naturally this raised a tumult. The preacher elevated his brows, struck dumb by such a scandal; indignation strangled the words in his throat; he could only strike the pulpit with his fists. This had its effect. The old woman dropped the shoe and, still grumbling and signing herself, sank on her knees.

“Ah, ah, ah, ah!” the irate priest could at last articulate. “It is for this that I have preached to you all the morning! Savages! You respect nothing! Behold the work of the incontinence of the century!” And launched again upon this theme, he preached a half hour longer. The alcalde breathed loud. Maria Clara, having studied all the pictures in sight, had dropped her head. Crisóstomo had ceased to be moved by the sermon. He was picturing a little house, high up among the mountains, with Maria Clara in the garden. Why concern himself with men, dragging out their lives in the miserable pueblos of the valley?

At length the sermon ended, and the mass went on. At the moment when all were kneeling and the priests bowed their heads at the “Incarnatus est,” a man murmured in Ibarra’s ear: “At the blessing of the cornerstone do not

separate yourself from the curate; do not go down into the trench. Your life is at stake!”

It was the helmsman.[126]
[Contents]

XXVI.
The Crane.

It was indeed not an ordinary crane that the Mongol had built for letting the enormous cornerstone of the school into the trench. The framework was complicated and the cables passed over extraordinary pulleys. Flags, streamers, and garlands of flowers, however, hid the mechanism. By means of a cleverly contrived capstan, the enormous stone held suspended over the open trench could be raised or lowered with ease by a single man.

“See!” said the Mongol to Señor Juan, inserting the bar and turning it. “See how I can manipulate the thing up here and unaided!”

Señor Juan was full of admiration.

“Who taught you mechanics?” he asked.

“My father, my late father,” replied the man, with his peculiar smile, “and Don Saturnino, the grandfather of Don Crisóstomo, taught him.”

“You must know then about Don Saturnino——”

“Oh, many things! Not only did he beat his workmen and expose them to the sun, but he knew how to awaken sleepers and put waking men to sleep. Ah, you will see presently what he could teach! You will see!”

On a table with Persian spread, beside the trench, were the things to be put into the cornerstone, and the glass box and leaden cylinder which were to preserve for the future these souvenirs, this mummy of an epoch.

Under two long booths near at hand were sumptuous [127]tables, one for the school-children, without wine, and heaped with fruits; the other for the distinguished visitors. The booths were joined by a sort of bower of leafy branches, where were chairs for the musicians, and tables with cakes, confitures, and carafes of water, for the public in general.
The crowd, gay in garments of many colors, was massed under the trees to avoid the ardent rays of the sun, and the children, to better see the ceremony of the dedication, had climbed up among the branches.

Soon bands were heard in the distance. The Mongol carefully examined his construction; he seemed nervous. A man with the appearance of a peasant standing near him on the edge of the excavation and close beside the capstan watched all his movements. It was Elias, well disguised by his salakot and rustic costume.

The musicians arrived, preceded by a crowd of old and young in motley array. Behind came the alcalde, the municipal guard officers, the monks, and the Spanish Government clerks. Ibarra was talking with the alcalde; Captain Tiago, the alférez, the curate and a number of the rich country gentlemen accompanied the ladies, whose gay parasols gleamed in the sunshine.

As they approached the trench, Ibarra felt his heart beat. Instinctively he raised his eyes to the strange scaffolding. The Mongol saluted him respectfully, and looked at him intently a moment. Ibarra recognized Elias through his disguise, and the mysterious helmsman, by a significant glance, recalled the warning in the church.

The curate put on his robes and began the office. The one-eyed sacristan held his book; a choir boy had in charge the holy water and sprinkler. The men uncovered, and the crowd stood so silent that, though the father read low, his voice was heard to tremble.

The manuscripts, journals, money, and medals to be preserved [128]in remembrance of this day had been placed in the glass box and the box itself hermetically sealed within the leaden cylinder.
“Señor Ibarra, will you place the box in the stone? The curate is waiting for you,” said the alcalde in Ibarra’s ear.

“I should do so with great pleasure,” said Ibarra, “but it would be a usurpation of the honor; that belongs to the notary, who must draw up the written process.”

The notary gravely took the box, descended the carpeted stairway which led to the bottom of the trench, and with due solemnity deposited his burden in the hollow of the stone already laid. The curate took the sprinkler and sprinkled the stone with holy water.

Each one was now to deposit his trowel of cement on the surface of the lower stone, to seal it to the stone held suspended by the crane when that should be lowered.

Ibarra offered the alcalde a silver trowel, on which was engraved the date of the fête, but before using it His Excellency pronounced a short allocution in Castilian.

“Citizens of San Diego,” he said, “we have the honor of presiding at a ceremony whose importance you know without explanations. We are founding a school, and the school is the basis of society, the book wherein is written the future of each race.

“Citizens of San Diego! Thank God, who has given you these priests! Thank the Mother Country, who spreads civilization in these fertile isles and protects them with the covering of her glorious mantle. Thank God, again, who has enlightened you by his priests from his divine Word.

“And now that the first stone of this building has been blessed, we, the alcalde of this province, in the name of His Majesty the King, whom God guard; in the name of the illustrious Spanish Government, and under the protection [129]of its spotless and ever-victorious flag, consecrate this act and begin the building of this school!
“Citizens of San Diego, long live the king! Long live Spain! Long live the religious orders! Long live the Catholic church!”

“Long live the Señor Alcalde!” replied many voices.

Then the high official descended majestically, to the strains of the orchestras, put his trowel of cement on the stone, and came back as majestically as he had gone down.

The Government clerks applauded.

Ibarra offered the trowel to the curate, who descended slowly in his turn. In the middle of the staircase he raised his eyes to the great stone suspended above, but he stopped only a second, and continued the descent. This time the applause was a little warmer, Captain Tiago and the monks adding theirs to that of the clerks.

The notary followed. He gallantly offered the trowel to Maria Clara, but she refused, with a smile. The monks, the alférez, and others descended in turn, Captain Tiago not being forgotten.

Ibarra was left. He had ordered the stone to be lowered when the curate remembered him.

“You do not put on your trowelful, Señor Ibarra?” said the curate, with a familiar and jocular air.

“I should be Juan Palomo, who made the soup and then ate it,” replied Crisóstomo in the same light tone.

“You go down, of course,” said the alcalde, taking him by the arm in friendly fashion. “If not, I shall order that the stone be kept suspended, and we shall stay here till the Day of Judgment!”

Such a menace forced Ibarra to obey. He exchanged the silver trowel for a larger one of iron, as some people noticed, and started out calmly. Elias gave him an indefinable [130]look; his whole being seemed in it. The Mongol’s eyes were on the abyss at his feet.
Ibarra, after glancing rapidly at the block over his head, at Elias, and at the Mongol, said to Señor Juan, in a voice that trembled:

“Give me the tray and bring me the other trowel.”

He stood alone. Elias no longer looked at him, his eyes were riveted on the hands of the Mongol, who, bending over, was anxiously following the movements of Ibarra. Then the sound of Ibarra’s trowel was heard, accompanied by the low murmur of the clerks’ voices as they felicitated the alcalde on his speech.

Suddenly a frightful noise rent the air. A pulley attached to the base of the crane sprang out, dragging after it the capstan, which struck the crane like a lever. The beams tottered, the cables broke, and the whole fabric collapsed with a deafening roar and in a whirlwind of dust.

A thousand voices filled the place with cries of horror. People fled in all directions. Only Maria Clara and Brother Salvi remained where they were, pale, mute, incapable of motion.

As the cloud of dust thinned, Ibarra was seen upright among the beams, joists and cables, between the capstan and the great stone that had fallen. He still held the trowel in his hand. With eyes frightful to look at, he regarded a corpse half buried under the beams at his feet.

“Are you unhurt? Are you alive? For God’s sake, speak!” cried some one at last.

“A miracle! A miracle!” cried others.

“Come, take out the body of this man,” said Ibarra, as if waking from a dream. At the sound of his voice Maria Clara would have fallen but for the arms of her friends.

Then everything was confusion. All talked at once, gestured, went hither and thither, and knew not what to do.[131]
“Who is killed?” demanded the alférez.

“Arrest the head builder!” were the first words the alcalde could pronounce.

They brought up the body and examined it. It was that of the Mongol. The heart no longer beat.

The priests shook Ibarra’s hand, and warmly congratulated him.

“When I think that I was there a moment before!” said one of the clerks.

“It is well they gave the trowel to you instead of me,” said a trembling old man.

“Don Pascal!” cried some of the Spaniards.

“Señores, the Señor Ibarra lives, while I, if I had not been crushed, should have died of fright.”

Ibarra had been to inform himself of Maria Clara.

“Let the fête continue, Señor Ibarra,” said the alcalde, as he came back. “Thank God, the dead is neither priest nor Spaniard! You ought to celebrate your escape! What if the stone had fallen on you!”

“He had presentiments!” cried the notary. “He did not want to go down, that was plain to be seen!”

“It’s only an Indian!”

“Let the fête go on! Give us music! Mourning won’t raise the dead. Captain, let the inquest be held! Arrest the head builder!”

“Shall he be put in the stocks?”

“Yes, in the stocks! Music, music! The head builder in the stocks!”

“Señor Alcalde,” said Ibarra, “if mourning won’t raise the dead, neither will the imprisonment of a man whose guilt is not proven. I go security for his person and ask his liberty, for these fête days at least.”

“Very well! But let him not repeat it!” said the alcalde.[132]
All kinds of rumors circulated among the people. The idea of a miracle was generally accepted. Many said they had seen descend into the trench at the fatal moment a figure in a dark costume, like that of the Franciscans. ’Twas no doubt San Diego himself.

“A bad beginning,” muttered old Tasio, shaking his head as he moved away.
[133]
[Contents]

XXVII.
Free Thought.

Ibarra, who had gone home for a change of clothing, had just finished dressing when a servant announced that a peasant wished to see him. Supposing it to be one of his laborers, he had him taken to his work room, which was at the same time his library and chemical laboratory. To his great surprise he found himself face to face with the mysterious Elias.

“You saved my life,” said the man, speaking in Tagalo, and understanding the movement of Ibarra. “I have not half paid my debt. Do not thank me. It is I who should thank you. I have come to ask a favor.”

“Speak!” said his listener.

Elias fixed his melancholy eyes on Ibarra’s and went on:

“When the justice of man tries to clear up this mystery, and your testimony is taken, I entreat you not to speak to any one of the warning I gave you.”

“Do not be alarmed,” said Crisóstomo, losing interest; “I know you are pursued, but I’m not an informer.”

“I don’t speak for myself, but for you,” said Elias, with some haughtiness. “I have no fear of men.”

Ibarra grew surprised. This manner of speaking was new, and did not comport with the state or fortunes of the helmsman.

“Explain yourself!” he demanded.

“I am not speaking enigmas. To insure your safety, it [134]is necessary that your enemies believe you blind and confiding.”
“To insure my safety?” said Ibarra, thoroughly aroused.

“You undertake a great enterprise,” Elias went on. “You have a past. Your grandfather and your father had enemies. It is not criminals who provoke the most hatred; it is honorable men.”

“You know my enemies, then?”

Elias hesitated.

“I knew one; the dead man.”

“I regret his death,” said Ibarra; “from him I might have learned more.”

“Had he lived, he would have escaped the trembling hand of men’s justice. God has judged him!”

“Do you also believe in the miracle of which the people talk?”

“If I believed in such a miracle, I should not believe in God, and I believe in Him; I have more than once felt His hand. At the moment when the scaffolding gave way I placed myself beside the criminal.” Elias looked at Ibarra.

“You—you mean that you——”

“Yes, when his deadly work was about to be done, he was going to flee; I held him there; I had seen his crime! Let God be the only one who has the right over life!”

“And yet, this time you——”

“No!” cried Elias. “I exposed the criminal to the risk he had prepared for others; I ran the risk myself; and I did not strike him; I left him to be struck by the hand of God!”

Ibarra regarded the man in silence.

“You are not a peasant,” he said at last. “Who are you? Have you studied?”

“I’ve need of much belief in God, since I’ve lost faith in men,” said Elias, evading the question.[135]
“But God cannot speak to resolve each of the countless contests our passions raise; it is necessary, it is just, that man should sometimes judge his kind.”

“For good, yes; not for evil. To correct and ameliorate, not to destroy; because, if man’s judgments are erroneous, he has not the power to remedy the evil he has done. But this discussion is over my head, and I am detaining you. Do not forget what I came to entreat; save yourself for the good of your country!” And he started to go.

“And when shall I see you again?”

“Whenever you wish; whenever I can be of use to you; I am always your debtor!”[136]
[Contents]

XXVIII.
The Banquet.

All the distinguished people of the province were united in the carpeted and decorated booth. The alcalde was at one end of the table, Ibarra at the other. The talk was animated, even gay. The meal was half finished when a despatch was handed to Captain Tiago. He asked permission to read it; his face paled; then lighted up. “Señores,” he cried, quite beside himself, “His Excellency the captain-general is to honor my house with his presence!” And he started off running, carrying his despatch and his napkin, forgetting his hat, and pursued by exclamations and questions. The announcement of the tulisanes could not have put him to greater confusion.

“Wait a moment! When is he coming? Tell us?”

Captain Tiago was already in the distance.

“His Excellency asks the hospitality of Captain Tiago!” the guests exclaimed, apparently forgetting that they spoke before his daughter and his future son-in-law.

“He could hardly make a better choice,” said Ibarra, with dignity.

“This was spoken of yesterday,” said the alcalde, “but His Excellency had not fully decided.”

“Do you know how long he is to stay?” asked the alférez, uneasily.

“I’m not at all sure! His Excellency is fond of surprising people.”

Three other despatches were brought. They were for the [137]alcalde, the alférez, and the gobernadorcillo, and identical, announcing the coming of the governor. It was remarked that there was none for the curate.
“His Excellency arrives at four this afternoon,” said the alcalde, solemnly. “We can finish our repast.” It might have been Leonidas saying: “To-night we sup with Pluto!”

The conversation returned to its former course.

“I notice the absence of our great preacher,” said one of the clerks, an honest, inoffensive fellow, who had not yet said a word. Those who knew

the story of Ibarra's father looked significantly at one another. "Fools rush in," said the glances of some; but others, more considerate, tried to cover the error.

"He must be somewhat fatigued——"

"Somewhat!" cried the alférez. "He must be spent, as they say here, malunqueado. What a sermon!"

"Superb! Herculean!" was the opinion of the notary.

"Magnificent! Profound!" said a newspaper correspondent.

In the other booth the children were more noisy than little Filipinos are wont to be, for at table or before strangers they are usually rather too timid than too bold. If one of them did not eat with propriety, his neighbor corrected him. To one a certain article was a spoon; to others a fork or a knife; and as nobody settled their questions, they were in continual uproar.

Their fathers and mothers, simple peasants, looked in ravishment to see their children eating on a white cloth, and doing it almost as well as the curate or the alcalde. It was better to them than a banquet.

"Yes," said a young peasant woman to an old man grinding his buyo, "whatever my husband says, my Andoy shall be a priest. It is true, we are poor; but Father Mateo says Pope Sixtu was once a keeper of carabaos at Batanzas! [138]Look at my Andoy; hasn't he a face like St. Vincent?" and the good mother's mouth watered at the sight of her son with his fork in both hands!
"God help us!" said the old man, munching his sapa. "If Andoy gets to be pope, we will go to Rome! I can walk yet! Ho! Ho!"

Another peasant came up.

"It's decided, neighbor," he said, "my son is to be a doctor."

"A doctor! Don't speak of it!" replied Petra. "There's nothing like being a curate! He has only to make two or three turns and say 'déminos pabiscum' and he gets his money."

"And isn't it work to confess?"

“Work! Think of the trouble we take to find out the affairs of our neighbors! The curate has only to sit down, and they tell him everything!”

“And preaching? Don’t you call that work?”

“Preaching? Where is your head? To scold half a day from the pulpit without any one’s daring to reply and be paid for it into the bargain! Look, look at Father Dámaso! See how fat he gets with his shouting and pounding!”

In truth, Father Dámaso was that moment passing the children’s booth in the gait peculiar to men of his size. As he entered the other booth, he was half smiling, but so maliciously that at sight of it Ibarra, who was talking, lost the thread of his speech.

The guests were astonished to see the father, but every one except Ibarra received him with signs of pleasure. They were at the dessert, and the champagne was sparkling in the cups.

Father Dámaso’s smile became nervous when he saw Maria Clara sitting next Crisóstomo, but, taking a chair beside the alcalde, he said in the midst of a significant silence:[139]
“You were talking of something, señores; continue!”

“We had come to the toasts,” said the alcalde. “Señor Ibarra was mentioning those who had aided him in his philanthropic enterprise, and he was speaking of the architect when your reverence——”

“Ah, well! I know nothing about architecture,” interrupted Father Dámaso, “but I scorn architects and the simpletons who make use of them.”

“Nevertheless,” said the alcalde, as Ibarra was silent, “when certain buildings are in question, like a school, for example, an expert is needed ——”

“An expert!” cried the father, with sarcasm. “One needs be more stupid than the Indians, who build their own houses, not to know how to raise four walls and put a roof on them. Nothing else is needed for a school!”

Every one looked at Ibarra, but, though he grew a little pale, he pursued his conversation with Maria Clara.

“But does your reverence consider——”

“See here!” continued the Franciscan, again cutting off the alcalde. “See how one of our lay brothers, the most stupid one we have, built a hospital. He paid the workmen eight cuartos a day, and got them from other pueblos, too. Not much like these young feather-brains who ruin workmen, paying them three or four réales!”

“Does your reverence say he paid but eight cuartos? Impossible!” said the alcalde, hoping to change the course of the conversation.

“Yes, señor, and so should those do who pride themselves upon being good Spaniards. Since the opening of the Suez Canal, corruption has reached even here! When the Cape had to be doubled, not so many ruined men came here, and fewer went abroad to ruin themselves!”

“But Father Dámaso——”

“You know the Indian; as soon as he has learned anything, [140]he takes a title. All these beardless youths who go to Europe——”
“But, your reverence, listen——” began the alcalde, alarmed by the harshness of these words.

“Finish as they merit,” continued the priest. “The hand of God is in it; he is blind who does not see that. Already even the fathers of these reptiles receive their chastisement; they die in prison! Ah——”

He did not finish. Ibarra, livid, had been watching him. At these words he rose, gave one bound, and struck out with his strong hand. The monk, stunned by the blow, fell backward.

Surprised and terrified, not one of the spectators moved.

“Let no one come near!” said the young man in a terrible voice, drawing his slender blade, and holding the neck of the priest with his foot. “Let no one come, unless he wishes to die.”

Ibarra was beside himself, his whole body trembled, his threatening eyes were big with rage. Father Dámaso, regaining his senses, made an effort to rise, but Crisóstomo, grasping his neck, shook him till he had brought him to his knees.

“Señor de Ibarra! Señor de Ibarra!” stammered one and another. But nobody, not even the alférez, risked a movement. They saw the knife glitter; they calculated Crisóstomo’s strength, unleashed by anger; they were paralyzed.

“All you here, you have said nothing. Now it rests with me. I avoided him; God brings him to me. Let God judge!”

Ibarra breathed with effort, but his arm of iron kept harsh hold of the Franciscan, who struggled in vain to free himself.

“My heart beats true, my hand is firm——” And he looked about him.[141] “I ask you first, is there among you any one who has not loved his father, who has not loved his father’s memory; any one born in shame and abasement? See, hear this silence! Priest of a God of peace, thy mouth full of sanctity and religion, thy heart of corruption! Thou canst not know what it is to be a father; thou shouldst have thought of thy own! See, in all this crowd that you scorn there is not one like you! You are judged!”

The guests, believing he was going to strike, made their first movement.

“Do not come near us!” he cried again in the same threatening voice. “What? You fear I shall stain my hand in impure blood? Did I not tell you that my heart beats true? Away from us, and listen, priests, believing yourselves different from other men, giving yourselves other rights! My father was an honorable man. Ask the country which venerates his memory. My father was a good citizen, who sacrificed himself for me and for his country’s good. His house was open, his table set for the stranger or the exile who should turn to him! He was a Christian; always doing good, never pressing the weak, nor forcing tears from the wretched. As to this man, he opened his door to him, made him sit down at his table, and called him friend. And how did the man respond? He falsely accused him; he pursued him; he armed ignorance against him! Confiding in the sanctity of his office, he outraged his tomb, dishonored his memory; his hate troubled even the rest of the dead. And not yet satisfied, he now pursues the son. I fled from him, avoided his presence. You heard him this morning profane the chair, point me out to the people’s fanaticism; but I said nothing. Now, he comes here to seek a quarrel; I suffer in silence, until he again insults a memory sacred to all sons.

“You who are here, priests, magistrates, have you seen [142]your old father give himself for you, part from you for your good, die of grief in a prison, looking for your embrace, looking for consolation from any one who would bring it, sick, alone; while you in a foreign land? Then have you heard his name dishonored, found his tomb empty when you went there to pray? No? You are silent; then you condemn him!”

He raised his arm. But a girl, rapid as light, threw herself between him and the priest, and with her fragile hands held the avenging arm. It was Maria Clara. Ibarra looked at her with eyes like a madman’s. Then, little by little, his tense fingers relaxed; he let fall the knife, and, covering his face with his hands, he fled.[143]

[Contents]

XXIX.
Opinions.

The noise of the affair spread rapidly. At first no one believed it, but when there was no longer room for doubt, each made his comments, according to the degree of his moral elevation.

“Father Dámaso is dead,” said some. “When he was carried away, his face was congested with blood, and he no longer breathed.”

“May he rest in peace, but he has only paid his debt!” said a young stranger.

“Why do you say that?”

“One of us students who came from Manila for the fête left the church when the sermon in Tagalo began, saying it was Greek to him. Father Dámaso sent for him afterward, and they came to blows.”

“Are we returning to the times of Nero?” asked another student.

“You mistake,” replied the first. “Nero was an artist, and Father Dámaso is a jolly poor preacher!”

The men of more years talked otherwise.

“To say which was wrong and which right is not easy,” said the gobernadorcillo, “and yet, if Señor Ibarra had been more moderate——”

“You probably mean, if Father Dámaso had shown half the moderation of Señor Ibarra,” interrupted Don Filipo. “The pity is that the rôles were interchanged: the youth [144]conducted himself like an old man, and the old man like a youth.”

“And you say nobody but the daughter of Captain Tiago came between them? Not a monk, nor the alcalde?” asked Captain Martin. “I wouldn’t like to be in the young man’s shoes. None of those who were afraid of him will ever forgive him. Hah, that’s the worst of it!”

“You think so?” demanded Captain Basilio, with interest.

“I hope,” said Don Filipo, exchanging glances with Captain Basilio, “that the pueblo isn’t going to desert him. His friends at least——”

“But, señores,” interrupted the gobernadorcillo, “what can we do? What can the pueblo? Whatever happens, the monks are always in the right——”

“They are always in the right, because we always say they’re in the right. Let us say we are in the right for once, and then we shall have something to talk about!”

The gobernadorcillo shook his head.

“Ah, the young blood!” he said. “You don’t seem to know what country you live in; you don’t know your compatriots. The monks are rich; they are united; we are poor and divided. Try to defend him and you will see how you are left to compromise yourself alone!”

“Yes,” cried Don Filipo bitterly, “and it will be so as long as fear and prudence are supposed to be synonymous. Each thinks of himself, nobody of any one else; that is why we are weak!”

“Very well! Think of others and see how soon the others will let you hang!”

“I’ve had enough of it!” cried the exasperated lieutenant. “I shall give my resignation to the alcalde to-day.”

The women had still other thoughts.

“Aye!” said one of them. “Young people are always [145]the same. If his good mother were living, what would she say? When I think that my son, who is a young hothead, too, might have done the same thing——”
“I’m not with you,” said another woman. “I should have nothing against my two sons if they did as Don Crisóstomo.”

“What are you saying, Capitana Maria?” cried the first woman, clasping her hands.

“I’m a poor stupid,” said a third, the Capitana Tinay, “but I know what I’m going to do. I’m going to tell my son not to study any more. They say men of learning all die on the gallows. Holy Mary, and my son wants to go to Europe!”

“If I were rich as you, my children should travel,” said the Capitana Maria. “Our sons ought to aspire to be more than their fathers. I have not long to live, and we shall meet again in the other world.”

“Your ideas, Capitana Maria, are little Christian,” said Sister Rufa severely. “Make yourself a sister of the Sacred Rosary, or of St. Francis.”

“Sister Rufa, when I’m a worthy sister of men, I will think about being a sister of the saints,” said the capitana, smiling.

Under the booth where the children had their feast the father of the one who was to be a doctor was talking.

“What troubles me most,” said he, “is that the school will not be finished; my son will not be a doctor, but a carter.”

“Who said there wouldn’t be a school?”

“I say so. The White Fathers have called Don Crisóstomo plibastiero. There won’t be any school.”

The peasants questioned each other’s faces. The word was new to them.

“And is that a bad name?” one at last ventured to ask.[146]
“It’s the worst one Christian can give another.”

“Worse than tarantado and saragate?”

“If it weren’t, it wouldn’t amount to much.”

“Come now. It can’t be worse than indio, as the alférez says.”

He whose son was to be a carter looked gloomy. The other shook his head and reflected.

“Then is it as bad as betalapora, that the old woman of the alférez says?”

“You remember the word *ispichoso* (suspect), which had only to be said of a man to have the guards lead him off to prison? Well, plibastiero is worse yet; if any one calls you plibastiero, you can confess and pay your debts, for there’s nothing else left to do but get yourself hanged. That’s what the telegrapher and the sub-director say, and you know whether the telegrapher and the sub-director ought to know: one talks with iron wires, and the other knows Spanish, and handles nothing but the pen.”

The last hope fled.[147]
[Contents]

XXX.
The First Cloud.

The home of Captain Tiago was naturally not less disturbed than the minds of the crowd. Maria Clara refused to be comforted by her aunt and her foster-sister. Her father had forbidden her to speak to Crisóstomo until the ban of excommunication should be raised.

In the midst of his preparations for receiving the governor-general Captain Tiago was summoned to the convent.

“Don’t cry, my child,” said Aunt Isabel, as she polished the mirrors with a chamois skin, “the ban will be raised. They will write to the holy father. We will make a big offering. Father Dámaso only fainted; he isn’t dead!”

“Don’t cry,” whispered Andeng; “I will arrange to meet Crisóstomo.”

At last Captain Tiago came back. They scanned his face for answers to many questions; but the face of Captain Tiago spoke discouragement. The poor man passed his hand across his brow and seemed unable to frame a word.

“Well, Santiago?” demanded the anxious aunt.

He wiped away a tear and replied by a sigh.

“Speak, for heaven’s sake! What is it?”

“What I all the time feared,” he said at last, conquering his tears. “Everything is lost! Father Dámaso orders me to break the promise of marriage. They all say the same thing, even Father Sibyla. I must shut the doors of my house to him, and—I owe him more than fifty thousand pesos! I told the fathers so, but they wouldn’t take it into account. ‘Which would you rather lose,’ they said, ‘fifty[148]thousand pesos or your soul?’ Ah, St. Anthony, if I had known, if I had known!”
Maria Clara was sobbing.

“Don’t cry, my child,” he said, turning to her; “you aren’t like your mother; she never cried. Father Dámaso told me that a young friend of his is coming from Spain; he intends him for your fiancé——”

Maria Clara stopped her ears.

“But, Santiago, are you mad?” cried Aunt Isabel. “Speak to her of another fiancé now? Do you think your daughter changes them as she does her gloves?”

“I have thought about it, Isabel; but what would you have me do? They threaten me, too, with excommunication.”

“And you do nothing but distress your daughter! Aren’t you the friend of the archbishop? Why don’t you write to him?”

“The archbishop is a monk, too. He will do only what the monks say. But don’t cry, Maria; the governor-general is coming. He will want to see you, and your eyes will be red. Alas, I thought I was going to have such a good afternoon! Without this misfortune I should be the happiest of men, with everybody envying me! Be calm, my child, I am more unhappy than you, and I don’t cry. You may find a better fiancé; but as for me, I lose fifty thousand pesos! Ah, Virgin of Antipolo, if only I have luck tonight!”

Salvos, the sound of wheels and of horses galloping, the band playing the Royal March, announced the arrival of His Excellency the governor-general of the Philippine Islands. Maria Clara ran to hide in her chamber. Poor girl! Her heart was at the mercy of rude hands that had no sense of its delicate fibres.

While the house was filling with people, while heavy footsteps, [149]words of command, and the hurling of sabres and spurs resounded all about, the poor child, heart-broken, was half-lying, half-kneeling before that picture of the Virgin where Delaroche represents her in a grievous solitude, as though he had surprised her returning from the sepulchre of her son. Maria Clara did not think of the grief of this mother; she thought only of her own. Her head bent on her breast, her hands pressed against the floor, she seemed a lily broken by the storm. A future for years caressed in dreams, illusions born in childhood, fostered in youth, grown a part of her being, they thought to shatter all these with a word, to drive it all out of her mind and heart. A devout Catholic, a loving daughter, the excommunication terrified her. Not so much her father’s commands as her desire for his peace of mind demanded from her the sacrifice of her love. And in this moment she felt for the first time the full strength of her affection for Crisóstomo. The

peaceful river glides over its sandy bed under the nodding flowers along its banks; the wind scarcely ridges its current; it seems to sleep; but farther down the banks close in, rough rocks choke the channel, a heap of knotty trunks forms a dyke; then the river roars, revolts, its waters whirl, and shake their plumes of spray, and, raging, beat the rocks and rush on madly. So this tranquil love was now transformed and the tempests were let loose.
She would have prayed; but who can pray without hope? "O God!" her heart complained. "Why refuse a man the love of others? Thou givest him the sunshine and the air; thou dost not hide from him the sight of heaven. Why take away that love without which he cannot live?"

The poor child, who had never known a mother of her own, had brought her grief to that pure heart which knew only filial and maternal love, to that divine image of womanhood of whose tenderness we dream, whom we call Mary.[150]
"Mother, mother!" she sobbed.

Aunt Isabel came to find her; her friends were there, and the governor-general had asked for her.

"Dear aunt, tell them I am ill!" she begged in terror. "They will want me to play and sing!"

"Your father has promised. Would you make your father break his word?"

Maria Clara rose, looked at her aunt, threw out her beautiful arms with a sob, then stood still till she was outwardly calm, and went to obey.[151]
[Contents]

XXXI.
His Excellency.

“I want to talk with that young man,” said the general to one of his aids; “he rouses all my interest.”

“He has been sent for, my general; but there is here another young man of Manila who insists upon seeing you. We told him you have not the time; that you did not come to give audiences. He replied that Your Excellency has always the time to do justice.”

The general, perplexed, turned to the alcalde.

“If I am not mistaken,” said the alcalde, with an inclination of the head, “it is a student who this morning had trouble with Father Dámaso about the sermon.”

“Another still? Has this monk started out to put the province to revolt, or does he think he commands here? Admit the young man!” And the governor got up and walked nervously back and forth.

In the ante-chamber some Spanish officers and all the functionaries of the pueblo were talking in groups. All the monks, too, except Father Dámaso, had come to pay their respects to the governor.

“His Excellency begs your reverences to attend a moment,” said the aide-de-camp. “Enter, young man!”

The young Manilian who confounded the Tagalo with the Greek entered, trembling.

Every one was greatly astonished. His Excellency must be much annoyed to make the monks wait this way. Said Brother Sibyla:[152]
“I have nothing to say to him, and I’m wasting my time here.”

“I also,” said an Augustin. “Shall we go?”

“Would it not be better to find out what he thinks?” asked Brother Salvi. “We should avoid a scandal, and we could remind him—of his duty——”

“Your reverences may enter,” said the aid, conducting back the young man, who came out radiant.

The fathers went in and saluted the governor.

“Who among your reverences is the Brother Dámaso?” demanded His Excellency at once, without asking them to be seated or inquiring for their health, and without any of those complimentary phrases which form the repertory of dignitaries.

“Señor, Father Dámaso is not with us,” replied Father Sibyla, in a tone almost as dry.

“Your Excellency’s servant is ill,” added the humble Brother Salvi. “We come, after saluting Your Excellency and inquiring for his health, to speak in the name of Your Excellency’s respectful servant, who has had the misfortune——”

“Oh!” interrupted the captain-general, with a nervous smile, while he twirled a chair on one leg. “If all the servants of my Excellency were like the Father Dámaso, I should prefer to serve my Excellency myself!”

Their reverences did not seem to know what to reply.

“Won’t your reverences sit down?” added the governor in more conventional tone.

Captain Tiago, in evening dress and walking on tiptoe, came in, leading by the hand Maria Clara, hesitating, timid. Overcoming her agitation, she made her salute, at once ceremonial and graceful.

“This sigñorita is your daughter!” exclaimed the surprised governor. “Happy the fathers whose daughters are [153]like you, sigñorita. They have told me about you, and I wish to thank you in the name of His Majesty the King, who loves the peace and tranquillity of his subjects, and in my own name, in that of a father who has daughters. If there is anything you would wish, sigñorita——”
“Señor!” protested Maria, trembling.

“The Señor Don Juan Crisóstomo Ibarra awaits Your Excellency’s orders,” announced the ringing voice of the aide-de-camp.

“Permit me, sigñorita, to see you again before I leave the pueblo. I have yet things to say to you. Señor acalde, Your Highness will accompany me on the walk I wish to take after the private conference I shall have with the Señor Ibarra.”

“Your Excellency,” said Father Salvi humbly, “will permit us to inform him that the Señor Ibarra is excommunicated——”

The general broke in.

“I am happy,” he said, “in being troubled about nothing but the state of Father Dámaso. I sincerely desire his complete recovery, for, at his age, a voyage to Spain in search of health would be somewhat disagreeable. But all depends upon him. Meanwhile, God preserve the health of your reverences!”

All retired.

“In his own case also everything depends upon him,” murmured Brother Salvi as he went out.

“We shall see who makes the earliest voyage to Spain!” added another Franciscan.

“I shall go immediately,” said Father Sibyla, in vexation.

“We, too,” grumbled the Augustins.

Both parties bore it ill that for the fault of a Franciscan His Excellency should have received them so coldly.[154]
In the ante-chamber they encountered Ibarra, who a few hours before had been their host. There was no exchange of greetings, but there were eloquent looks. The alcalde, on the contrary, gave Ibarra his hand. On the threshold Crisóstomo met Maria coming out. Looks spoke again, but very differently this time.

Though this encounter with the monks had seemed to him of bad augury, Ibarra presented himself in the utmost calm. He bowed profoundly. The captain-general came forward.

“It gives me the greatest satisfaction, Señor Ibarra, to take you by the hand. I hope for your entire confidence.” And he examined the young man with

evident satisfaction.

“Señor, so much kindness——”

“Your surprise shows that you did not expect a friendly reception; that was to doubt my fairness.”

“A friendly reception, señor, for an insignificant subject of His Majesty, like myself, is not fairness, but favor.”

“Well, well!” said the general, sitting down and motioning Crisóstomo to a seat. “Let us have a moment of open hearts. I am much gratified by what you are doing, and have proposed you to the Government of His Majesty for a decoration in recompense for your project of the school. Had you invited me, I should have found it a pleasure to be here for the ceremony. Perhaps I should have been able to save you an annoyance. But as to what happened between you and Father Dámaso, have neither fear nor regrets. Not a hair of your head shall be harmed so long as I govern the islands; and in regard to the excommunication, I will talk with the archbishop. We must conform ourselves to our circumstances. We cannot laugh at it here, as we might in Europe. But be more prudent in the future. You have weighted yourself with the religious orders, who, from their office and their wealth, must be respected. I protect [155]you, because I like a good son. By heaven, I don’t know what I should have done in your place!”
Then, quickly changing the subject, he said:

“They tell me you have just returned from Europe. You were in Madrid?”

“Yes, señor, several months.”

“How happens it that you return without bringing me a letter of recommendation?”

“Señor,” replied Ibarra, bowing, “because, having heard there of the character of Your Excellency, I thought a letter of recommendation would not only be unnecessary, but might even offend you; the Filipinos are all recommended to you.”

A smile curled the lips of the old soldier, who replied slowly, as though meditating and weighing his words:

“I cannot help being flattered that you think so. And yet, young man, you should know what a weight rests on our shoulders. Here we old soldiers have to be all—king, ministers of state, of war, of justice, of everything; and yet, in every event, we have to consult the far-off mother country, which often must approve or reject our propositions with blind justice. If in Spain itself, with the advantage of everything near and familiar, all is imperfect and defective, the wonder is that all here is not revolution. It is not lack of good will in the governors, but we must use the eyes and arms of strangers, of whom, for the most part, we can know nothing, and who, instead of serving their country, may be serving only their own interests. The monks are a powerful aid, but they are not sufficient. You inspire great interest in me, and I would not have the imperfection of our governmental system tell in anyway against you. I cannot watch over any one; every one cannot come to me. Tell me, can I be useful to you in any way? Have you any request to make?”

Ibarra reflected.[156]
“Señor,” he replied, “my great desire is for the happiness of my country, and I would that happiness might be due to the efforts of our mother country and of my fellow-citizens united to her and united among themselves by the eternal bonds of common views and interests. What I would ask, the Government alone can give, and that after many continuous years of labor and of well-conceived reforms.”

The general gave him a long look, which Ibarra bore naturally, without timidity, without boldness.

“You are the first man with whom I’ve spoken in this country,” cried His Excellency, stretching out his hand.

“Your Excellency has seen only those who while away their lives in cities; he has not visited the falsely maligned cabins of our villages. There Your Excellency would be able to see veritable men, if to be a man a noble heart and simple manners are enough.”

The captain-general rose and walked up and down the room.

“Señor Ibarra,” he said, stopping before Crisóstomo, “your education and manner of thinking are not for this country. Sell what you own and come with me when I go back to Europe; the climate will be better for you.”

“I shall remember all my life this kindness of Your Excellency,” replied Ibarra, moved; “but I must live in the country where my parents lived——”

“Where they died, you would say more justly. Believe me, I, perhaps, know your country better than you do yourself. Ah, but I forget! You are to marry an adorable girl, and I’m keeping you from her all this time! Go—go to her! And that you may have more freedom, send the father to me,” he added, smiling. “Don’t forget, though, that I want your company for the promenade.”

Ibarra saluted, and went out.[157]
The general called his aide-de-camp.

“I am pleased,” said he, giving him a light tap on the shoulder; “I have seen to-day for the first time how one may be a good Spaniard without ceasing to be a good Filipino. What a pity that this Ibarra some day or other——but call the alcalde.”

The judge at once presented himself.

“Señor alcalde,” said the general, “to avoid a repetition of scenes like those of which you were a spectator to-day—scenes, I deplore, because they reflect upon the Government and upon all Spaniards—I recommend the Señor Ibarra to your utmost care and consideration.”

The alcalde perceived the reprimand and lowered his eyes.

Captain Tiago presented himself, stiff and unnatural.

“Don Santiago,” the general said affectionately, “a moment ago I congratulated you upon having a daughter like the Señorita de los Santos. Now I make you my compliments upon your future son-in-law. The most virtuous of daughters is worthy of the first citizen of the Philippines. May I know the day of the wedding?”

“Señor——” stammered Captain Tiago, wiping drops of sweat from his brow.

“Then nothing is settled, I see. If witnesses are lacking, it will give me the greatest pleasure to be one of them.”

“Yes, señor,” said Captain Tiago, with a smile to stir compassion.

Ibarra had gone off almost running to find Maria Clara. He had so much to talk over with her. Through a door he heard the murmur of girls' voices. He knocked.

"Who is there?" asked Maria.

"I."

The voices were hushed, but the door did not open.[158]
"It's I. May I come in?" demanded Crisóstomo, his heart beginning to beat violently.

The silence continued. After some moments, light foot-steps approached the door, and the voice of Sinang said through the keyhole:

"Crisóstomo, we're going to the theatre to-night. Write what you have to say to Maria Clara."

"What does that mean?" said Ibarra to himself as he slowly left the door.
[159]
[Contents]

XXXII.
The Procession.

That evening, in the light of countless lanterns, to the sound of bells and of continuous detonations, the procession started for the fourth time.

The captain-general, who had set out on foot, accompanied by his two aides-de-camp, Captain Tiago, the alcalde, the alférez, and Ibarra, and preceded by the guards, to open a passage, was to view the procession from the house of the gobernadorcillo. This functionary had built a platform for the recitation of a loa, a religious poem in honor of the patron saint.

Ibarra would gladly have renounced the hearing of this composition, but His Excellency had ordered his attendance, and Crisóstomo must console himself with the thought of seeing his fiancée at the theatre.

The procession began by the march of the silver candelabra, borne by three sacristans. Then came the school children and their master, then other children, all with paper lanterns, shaped and ornamented according to the taste of each child—for each was his own lantern-maker—hoisted on bamboo poles of various lengths and lighted by bits of candles. An effigy of St. John the Baptist followed, borne on a litter, and then came St. Francis, surrounded by crystal lamps. A band followed, and then the standard of the saint, borne by the brothers of the Third Order, praying aloud in a sort of lamentation. San Diego came next, his car drawn by six brothers of the Third Order, probably fulfilling [160]some vow. St. Mary Magdalen followed him, a beautiful image with splendid hair, wearing a costume of silk spangled with gold, and holding a handkerchief of embroidered piña in her jewelled hands. Lights and incense surrounded her, and her glass tears reflected the varied colors of Bengal lights. St. John the Baptist moved far ahead, as if ashamed of his camel's hair beside all this gold and glitter.

After the Magdalen came the women of the order, the elder first, so that the young girls should surround the car of the Virgin; behind them was the curate under his dais. The car of the Virgin was preceded by men dressed as phantoms, to the great terror of the children; the women wore habits like those of religious orders. In the midst of this obscure mass of robes and cowls and cordons one saw, like dainty jasmines, like fresh sampages amid old rags, twelve little girls in white, their hair free. Their eyes shone like

their necklaces. One might have thought them little genii of the light taken prisoner by spectres. By two wide blue ribbons they were attached to the car of the Virgin, like the doves which draw the car of Spring.

At the gobernadorcillo's the procession stopped, all the images and their attendants were drawn up around the platform, and all eyes were fixed on the half-open curtain. At length it parted, and a young man appeared, winged, booted like a cavalier, with sash and belt and plumed hat, and in Latin, Castilian, and Tagal recited a poem as extraordinary as his attire. The verses ended, St. John pursued his bitter way.

At the moment when the figure of the Virgin passed the house of Captain Tiago, a celestial song greeted it. It was a voice, sweet and tender, almost weeping out the Gounod "Ave Maria." The music of the procession died away, the prayers ceased. Father Salvi himself stood still. The [161]voice trembled; it drew tears; it was more than a salutation: it was a supplication and a complaint.
Ibarra heard, and fear and darkness entered his heart. He felt the suffering in the voice and dared not ask himself whence it came.

The captain-general was speaking to him.

"I should like your company at table. We will talk to those children who have disappeared," he said.

Crisóstomo, looking at the general without seeing him, asked himself under his breath: "Can I be the cause?" And he followed the governor mechanically.[162]
[Contents]

XXXIII.
Doña Consolacion.

Why were the windows of the house of the alférez not only without lanterns, but shuttered? Where, when the procession passed, were the masculine head with its great veins and purple lips, the flannel shirt, and the big cigar of the "Muse of the Municipal Guard"?

The house was sad, as Sinang said, because the people were gay. Had not a sentinel paced as usual before the door one might have thought the place uninhabited.

A feeble light showed the disorder of the room, where the alféreza was sitting, and pierced the dusty and spider-webbed conches of the windows. The dame, according to her idle custom, was dozing in a fauteuil. To deaden the sound of the bombs, she had coifed her head in a handkerchief, from which escaped her tangled hair, short and thin. This morning she had not been to mass, not because she did not wish it, but because her husband had not permitted it, accompanying his prohibition with oaths and threats of blows. Doña Consolacion was now dreaming of revenge. She bestirred herself at last and ran over the house from one end to the other, her dark face disquieting to look at. A spark flashed from her eyes like that from the pupil of a serpent trapped and about to be crushed. It was cold, luminous, penetrating; it was viscous, cruel, repulsive. The smallest error on the part of a servant, the least noise, drew forth words injurious enough to smirch the soul; but nobody replied; to offer excuse would have been to commit another crime.[163]

In this way the day passed. Meeting no opposition—her husband had been invited to the gobernadorcillo's—she stored up spleen; the cells of her organism seemed slowly charging with electric force, which burst out, later on, in a tempest.

Sisa had been in the barracks since her arrest the day before. The alférez, fearing she might become the sport of the crowd, had ordered her to be kept until the fête was over.

This evening, whether she had heard the song of Maria Clara, whether the bands had recalled airs that she knew, for some reason she began to chant,

in her sympathetic voice, the songs of her youth. The soldiers heard and became still; they knew these airs, had sung them themselves when they were young and free and innocent. Doña Consolacion heard, too, and inquired for the singer.

“Have her come up at once,” she said, after a moment’s reflection, something like a smile flickering on her dry lips.

The soldiers brought Sisa, who came without fear or question. When she entered she seemed to see no one, which wounded the vanity of the dreadful muse. Doña Consolacion coughed, motioned the soldiers to withdraw, and, taking down her husband’s riding whip, said in a sinister voice:

“Vamos, magcanter icau!”

It was an order to sing, in a mixture of Castilian and Tagalo. Doña Consolacion affected ignorance of her native tongue, thinking thus to give herself the air of a veritable *Orofea*, as she said in her attempt at Europea. For if she martyred the Tagalo, she treated Castilian worse, though her husband, and chairs and shoes, had contributed to giving her lessons.

Sisa had been happy enough not to understand. The forehead of the shrew unknotted a bit, and a look of satisfaction animated her face.[164]
“Tell this woman to sing!” she said to the orderly. “She doesn’t understand; she doesn’t know Spanish!”

The orderly spoke to Sisa, and she began at once the “Night Song.”

At first Doña Consolacion listened with a mocking smile, but little by little it left her lips. She became attentive, then serious. Her dry and withered heart received the rain. “The sadness, the cold, the dew come down from the sky in the mantle of the night,” seemed to fall upon her heart; she understood “the flower, full of vanity, and prodigal with its splendors in the sun, now, at the fall of day, withered and stained, repentant and disillusioned, trying to raise its poor petals toward heaven, begging a shade to hide it from the mockery of the sun, who had seen it in its pomp, and was laughing at the impotence of its pride; begging also a drop of dew to be let fall upon it.”

“No! Stop singing!” she cried in perfect Tagal. “Stop! These verses bore me!”

Sisa stopped. The orderly thought: “Ah, she knows the Tagal!” And he regarded his mistress with admiration.

She saw she had betrayed herself, became ashamed, and shame in her unfeminine nature meant rage. She showed the door to the imprudent orderly, and shut it behind him with a blow. Then she took several turns around the room, wringing the whip in her nervous hands. At last, planting herself before Sisa, she said to her in Spanish: “Dance!”

Sisa did not move.

“Dance! Dance!” she repeated in a threatening voice. The poor thing looked at her with vacant eyes. The vixen took hold of one of her arms and then the other, raising them and swaying them about. It was of no use. Sisa did not understand.

In vain Doña Consolacion began to leap about, making signs for Sisa to imitate her. In the distance a band was [165]playing a slow and majestic march; but the creature leaped furiously to another measure, beating within herself. Sisa looked on, motionless. A faint curiosity rose in her eyes, a feeble smile moved her pale lips; the alféreza’s dance pleased her.
The dancer stopped, as if ashamed, and raised the terrible whip, well known to thieves and soldiers.

“Now,” said she, “it’s your turn! Dance!” And she began to give light taps to the bare feet of bewildered Sisa, whose face contracted with pain; the poor thing tried to ward off the blows with her hands.

“Ah! You’re beginning, are you?” cried Doña Consolacion, with savage joy, and from lento, she passed to allegro vivace.

Sisa cried out and drew up first one foot and then the other.

“Will you dance, accursed Indian!” and the whip whistled.

Sisa let herself fall to the floor, trying to cover her feet, and looking at her tormenter with haggard eyes. Two lashes on the shoulders forced her to rise with screams.

Her thin chemise was torn, the skin broken and the blood flowing.

This excited Doña Consolacion still more.

“Dance! Dance!” she howled, and seizing Sisa with one hand, while she beat her with the other, she commenced to leap about again.

At length Sisa understood, and followed, moving her arms without rhythm or measure. A smile of satisfaction came to the lips of the horrible woman —the smile of a female Mephistopheles who has found an apt pupil: hate, scorn, mockery, and cruelty were in it; a burst of demoniacal laughter could not have said more.

Absorbed by her delight in this spectacle, the alféreza did [166]not know that her husband had arrived until the door was violently thrown open with a kick.
The alférez was pale and morose. When he saw what was going on, he darted a terrible glance at his wife, then quietly put his hand on the shoulder of the strange dancer, and stopped her motion. Sisa, breathing hard, sat down on the floor. He called the orderly.

“Take this woman away,” he said; “see that she is properly cared for, and has a good dinner and a good bed. To-morrow she is to be taken to Señor Ibarra’s.”

Then he carefully closed the door after them, pushed the bolt, and approached his wife.[167]
[Contents]

XXXIV.
Right and Might.

It was ten o'clock in the evening. The first rockets were slowly going up in the dark sky, where bright-colored balloons shone like new stars. On the ridge-poles of the houses men were seen armed with bamboo poles, with pails of water at hand. Their dark silhouettes against the clear gray of the night seemed phantoms come to share in the gayety of men. They were there to look out for balloons that might fall burning.

Crowds of people were going toward the plaza to see the last play at the theatre. Bengal fires burned here and there, grouping the merry-makers fantastically.

The grand estrade was magnificently illuminated. Thousands of lights were fixed round the pillars, hung from the roof and clustered near the ground.

In front of the stage the orchestra was tuning its instruments. The dignitaries of the pueblo, the Spaniards, and wealthy strangers occupied seats in rows. The people filled the rest of the place; some had brought benches, rather to mount them than to sit on them, and others noisily protested against this.

Comings and goings, cries, exclamations, bursts of laughter, jokes, a whistle, swelled the tumult. Here the leg of a bench gave way and precipitated those on it, to the delight of the spectators; there was a dispute for place; and a little beyond a fracas of glasses and bottles. It was Andeng, carrying a great tray of drinks, and unfortunately she had [168]encountered her fiancé, who was disposed to profit by the occasion.
The lieutenant, Don Filipo, was in charge of the spectacle, for the gobernadorcillo was playing monte, of which he was a passionate devotee. Don Filipo was talking with old Tasio, who was on the point of leaving.

"Aren't you going to see the play?"

"No, thank you! My own mind suffices for rambling and dreaming," replied the philosopher, laughing. "But I have a question to propose. Have you ever observed the strange nature of our people? Pacific, they love warlike spectacles; democratic, they adore emperors, kings, and princes; irreligious, they ruin themselves in the pomps of the ritual; the nature of our women is

gentle, but they have deliriums of delight when a princess brandishes a lance. Do you know the cause of all this? Well——"

The arrival of Maria Clara and her friends cut short the conversation. Don Filipo accompanied them to their places. Then came the curate, with his usual retinue.

The evening began with Chananay and Marianito in "Crispino and the Gossip." The scene fixed the attention of every one. The act was ending when Ibarra entered. His coming excited a murmur, and eyes turned from him to the curate. But Crisóstomo observed nothing. He gracefully saluted Maria and her friends and sat down. The only one who spoke to him was Sinang.

"Have you been watching the fireworks?" she asked.

"No, little friend, I had to accompany the governor-general."

"That was too bad!"

Brother Salvi had risen, gone to Don Filipo, and appeared to be having with him a serious discussion. He spoke with heat, the lieutenant calmly and quietly.

"I am sorry not to be able to satisfy your reverence, but [169]Señor Ibarra is one of the chief contributors to the fête, and has a perfect right to be here so long as he creates no disturbance."
"But is it not creating a disturbance to scandalize all good Christians?"

"Father," replied Don Filipo, "my slight authority does not permit me to interfere in religious matters. Let those who fear Señor Ibarra's contact avoid him: he forces himself upon no one; the señor alcalde and the captain-general have been in his company all the afternoon; it hardly becomes me to give them a lesson."

"If you do not put him out of the place, we shall go."

"I should be very sorry, but I have no authority to remove him."

The curate repented of his threat, but there was now no remedy. He motioned to his companions, who rose reluctantly, and all went out, not without hostile glances toward Ibarra.

The whisperings and murmurs began again. Several people came up to Crisóstomo and said:

“We are with you; pay no attention to them!”

“To whom?” he asked in astonishment.

“Those who have gone out because you are here; they say you are excommunicated.”

Ibarra, surprised, not knowing what to say, looked about him. Maria’s face was hidden.

“Is it possible? Are we yet in the middle ages?” he began. But he checked himself and said to the girls:

“I must excuse myself; I will be back to go home with you.”

“Oh, stay!” said Sinang. “Yeyeng is going to dance!”

“I cannot, little friend.”

While Yeyeng was coming forward, two soldiers of the [170]guard approached Don Filipo and demanded that the representation be stopped.
“And why?” he asked in surprise.

“Because the alférez and his wife have been fighting; they want to sleep.”

“Tell the alférez we have the permission of the alcalde of the province, and nobody in the pueblo can overrule that, not even the gobernadorcillo.”

“But we have our orders to stop the performance.”

Don Filipo shrugged his shoulders and turned his back. The Comedy Company of Tondo was about to give a play, and the audience was settling for its enjoyment.

The Filipino is passionately fond of the theatre; he listens in silence, never hisses, and applauds with measure. Does not the spectacle please him? He chews his buyo and goes out quietly, not to trouble those who may like it. He expects in his plays a combat every fifteen seconds, and all the rest of the time repartee between comic personages, or terrifying metamorphoses.

The comedy chosen for this fête was “Prince Villardo, or the Nails Drawn from the Cellar of Infamy,” comedy with sorcery and fireworks.

Prince Villardo presented himself, defying the Moors, who held his father prisoner. He threatened to cut off all their heads at a single stroke and send them into the moon.

Fortunately for the Moors, as they were preparing for the combat, a tumult arose. The music stopped, and the musicians assailed the theatre with their instruments, which went flying in all directions. The valiant Villardo, unprepared for so many foes, threw down his sword and buckler and took to flight, and the Moors, seeing the hasty leave of so terrible a Christian, made bold to follow him. Cries, exclamations, and imprecations rose on all sides, people ran against one another, lights went out, children screamed, and [171]benches were overturned in a hurly-burly. Some cried fire, some cried “The tulisanes!”

What had happened? The two guards had driven off the musicians, and the lieutenant and some of the cuadrilleros were vainly trying to check their flight.

“Take those two men to the tribunal!” cried Don Filipo. “Don’t let them escape!”

When the crowd had recovered from its fright and taken account of what had happened, indignation broke forth.

“That’s why they are for!” cried a woman, brandishing her arms; “to trouble the pueblo! They are the real tulisanes! Fire the barracks!”

Stones rained on the group of cuadrilleros leading off the guards, and the cry to fire the barracks was repeated. Chananay in her costume of Leonora in “Il Trovatore” was talking with Ratia, in schoolmaster’s dress; Yeyeng, wrapped in a shawl, was attended by Prince Villardo, while the Moors tried to console the mortified musicians; but already the crowd had determined upon action, and Don Filipo was doing his best to hold them in check.

“Do nothing rash!” he cried. “To-morrow we will demand satisfaction; we shall have justice; I promise you justice!”

“No,” replied some; “that’s what they did at Calamba: they promised justice, and the alcalde didn’t do a thing! We will take justice for ourselves! To the barracks!”

Don Filipo, looking about for some one to aid him, saw Ibarra.

“For heaven’s sake, Señor Ibarra, keep the people here while I go for the cuadrilleros!”

“What can I do?” demanded the perplexed young fellow; but Don Filipo was already in the distance.

Ibarra, in his turn, looked about for aid, and saw Elias. He ran to him, took him by the arm, and, speaking in Spanish, [172]begged him to do what he could for order. The helmsman disappeared in the crowd. Animated discussions were heard, and rapid questions; then, little by little, the mass began to dissolve and to wear a less hostile attitude. It was time; the soldiers arrived with bayonets fixed.

As Ibarra was about to enter his house that night a little man in mourning, having a great scar on his left cheek, placed himself in front of him and bowed humbly.

“What can I do for you?” asked Crisóstomo.

“Señor, my name is José; I am the brother of the man killed this morning.”

“Ah,” said Ibarra, “I assure you I am not insensible to your loss. What do you wish of me?”

“Señor, I wish to know how much you are going to pay my brother’s family.”

“Pay!” repeated Crisóstomo, not without annoyance. “We will talk of this again; come to me to-morrow.”

“But tell me simply what you will give,” insisted José.

“I tell you we will talk of it another day, not now,” said Ibarra, more impatiently.

“Ah! You think because we are poor——”

Ibarra interrupted him.

“Don’t try my patience too far,” he said, moving on. José looked after him with a smile full of hatred.

“It is easy to see he is a grandson of the man who exposed my father to the sun,” he murmured between his teeth. “The same blood!” Then in a changed tone he added: “But if you pay well—friends!”[173]
[Contents]

XXXV.
Husband and Wife.

The fête was over, and the inhabitants of the pueblo now perceived, as they did every year, that their purses were empty, that in the sweat of their faces they had earned scant pleasure, and paid dear for noise and headaches. But what of that? The next year they would begin again; the next century it would still be the same, for it had been so up to this time, and there is nothing which can make people renounce a custom.

The house of Captain Tiago is sad. All the windows are closed; one scarcely dares make a sound; and nowhere but in the kitchen do they speak aloud. Maria Clara, the soul of the house, is sick in bed. The state of her health could be read on all faces, as our actions betray the griefs of our hearts.

"What do you think, Isabel, ought I to make a gift to the cross at Tunasan, or that at Matahong?" asks the unhappy father. "The cross at Tunasan grows, but that at Matahong perspires. Which do you call the more miraculous?"

Aunt Isabel reflected, nodded her head, and whispered:

"To grow is more miraculous; we all perspire, but we don't all grow."

"That's so, yes, Isabel; but, after all, for wood to perspire—well, then, the best thing is to make offerings to both."

A carriage stopping before the house cut short the conversation. Captain Tiago, followed by Aunt Isabel, ran down [174]the steps to receive the coming guests. They were the doctor, Don Tiburcio de Espadaña, his wife, the Doctora Doña Victorina de Los Reyes de de Espadaña, and a young Spaniard of attractive face and fine appearance.
The doctora wore a silk dress bordered with flowers, and a hat with a large parrot perched among bows of red and blue ribbons. The dust of the journey mingling with the rice powder on her cheeks, exaggerated her wrinkles; as when we saw her at Manila, she had given her arm to her lame husband.

"I have the pleasure of presenting to you our cousin, Don Alfonso Linares de Espadaña," said Doña Victorina, indicating the young man; "the adopted

son of a relative of Father Dámaso's, and private secretary of all the ministers——"

The young man bowed low; Captain Tiago barely escaped kissing his hand.

While the countless trunks, valises, and bags are being cared for and Captain Tiago is conducting his guests to their apartments, let us make a nearer acquaintance with these people whom we have not seen since the opening chapters.

Doña Victorina is a woman of forty-five summers, which, according to her arithmetic, are equivalent to thirty-two springs. In her youth she had been very pretty, but, enraptured in her own contemplation, she had looked with the utmost disdain on her numerous Filipino adorers, even scorning the vows of love once murmured in her ears or chanted under her balcony by Captain Tiago. Her aspirations bore her toward another race.

Her first youth, then her second, then her third, having passed in tending nets to catch in the ocean of the world the object of her dreams, Doña Victorina must in the end content herself with what fate willed her. It was a poor man [175]torn from his native Estramadure, who, after wandering six or seven years about the world, a modern Ulysses, found at length, in the island of Luzon, hospitality, money, and a faded Calypso.

Don Tiburcio was a modest man, without force, who would not willingly have injured a fly. He started for the Philippines as under-clerk of customs, but after breaking his leg was forced to give up his position. For a while he lived at the expense of some compatriots, but he found their bread bitter. As he had neither profession nor money, his advisers counselled him to go into the provinces and offer himself as a physician. At first he refused, but, necessity becoming pressing, his friends convinced him of the vanity of his scruples. He started out, kept by his conscience from asking more than small fees, and was on the road to prosperity when a jealous doctor called him to the attention of the College of Physicians at Manila. Nothing would have come of it, but the affair reached the ears of the people; loss of confidence followed, and then loss of patrons. Misery again stared him in the face when he heard of the affliction of Doña Victorina. Don Tiburcio saw here a patch of blue sky, and asked to be presented.

They met, and after a half-hour of conversation, reached an understanding. Without doubt she would have preferred a Spaniard less halting, less bald, without impediment of speech, and with more teeth; but such a Spaniard had never asked her hand, and at thirty-two what woman is not prudent?

For his part, Don Tiburcio resigned himself when he saw the spectre of famine raise its head. Not that he had ever had great ambitions or great pretensions; but his heart, virgin till now, had pictured a different divinity. He was, however, somewhat of a philosopher. He said to himself: "All that was a dream! Is the reality powdered and wrinkled, [176]homely and ridiculous? Well, I am bald and lame and toothless."
They were married then, and Doña Victorina was enchanted with her husband. She had him fitted out with false teeth, attired by the best tailors of the city, and ordered carriages and horses for the professional visits she intended him again to make.

While thus transforming her husband, she did not forget herself. She discarded the silk skirt and jacket of piña for European costume, loaded her head with false hair, and her person with such extravagances generally as to disturb the peace of a whole idle and tranquil neighborhood.

The glamour around the husband first began to dim when he tried to approach the subject of the rice powder by remarking that nothing is so ugly as the false or so admirable as the natural. Doña Victorina looked unpleasantly at his teeth, and he was silent. Indeed, at the end of a very short time the doctora had arrived at the complete subjugation of her husband, who no longer offered any more resistance than a little lap-dog. If he did anything to annoy her, she forbade his going out, and in her moments of greatest rage she tore out his false teeth, and left him, sometimes for days, horribly disfigured.

When they were well settled in Manila, Rodoreda received orders to engrave on a plate of black marble:

"Dr. De Espadaña,
Specialist in All Kinds of Diseases."

"Do you wish me to be put in prison?" asked Don Tiburcio in terror.

"I wish people to call you doctor and me doctora," said Doña Victorina, "but it must be understood that you treat only very rare cases."[177]

The señora signed her own name, Victorina de los Reyes de de Espadaña. Neither the engraver of her visiting cards nor her husband could make her renounce that second "de."

"If I use only one 'de,' people will think you haven't any, imbecile!" she said to Don Tiburcio.

Then the number of gewgaws grew, the layer of rice powder was thickened, the ribbons and laces were piled higher, and Doña Victorina regarded with more and more disdain her poor compatriots who had not had the fortune to marry husbands of so high estate as her own.

All this sublimity, however, did not prevent her being each day older and more ridiculous. Every time Captain Tiago was with her, and remembered that she had once really inspired him with love, he sent a peso to the church for a mass of thanksgiving. But he had much respect for Don Tiburcio, because of his title of specialist, and listened attentively to the rare sentences the doctor's impediment of speech let him pronounce. For this reason and because the doctor did not lavish his visits on people at large he had chosen him to treat Maria.

As to young Linares, Doña Victorina, wishing a steward from the peninsula, her husband remembered a cousin of his, a law student at Madrid, who was considered the most astute of the family. They sent for him, and the young man had just arrived.

Father Salvi entered while Don Santiago and his guests were at the second breakfast. They talked of Maria Clara, who was sleeping; they talked of the journey, and Doña Victorina exclaimed loudly at the costumes of the provincials, their houses of nipa, and their bamboo bridges. She did not omit to inform the curate of her friendly relations with the "Segundo Cabo," with this alcalde, with that councillor, all people of distinction, who had for her the greatest consideration.[178]

"If you had come two days earlier, Doña Victorina," said Captain Tiago, profiting by a slight pause in the lady's brilliant loquacity, "you would have found His Excellency the governor general seated in this very place."

"What! His Excellency was here? And at your house? Impossible!"

“I repeat that he was seated exactly here. If you had come two days ago ____”

“Ah! What a pity Clarita did not fall ill sooner!” she cried. “You hear, cousin! His Excellency was here! You know, Don Santiago, that at Madrid our cousin was the friend of ministers and dukes, and that he dined with the Count del Campanario.”

“The Duke de la Torre, Victorina,” suggested her husband.

“It is the same thing!”

“Shall I find Father Dámaso at his pueblo to-day?” Linares asked Brother Salvi.

“Father Dámaso is here, and may be with us at any moment.”

“I’m very glad! I have a letter for him, and if a happy chance had not brought me here, I should have come expressly to see him.”

Meanwhile the “happy chance,” that is to say, poor Maria Clara, had awakened.

“Come, de Espadaña, come, see Clarita,” said Doña Victorina. “It is for you he does this,” she went on, turning to Captain Tiago; “my husband attends only people of quality.”

The sick-room was almost in obscurity, the windows closed, for fear of draughts; two candles, burning before an image of the Virgin of Antipolo, sent out feeble glimmers.

Enveloped in multiple folds of white, the lovely figure of Maria lay on her bed of kamagon, behind curtains of jusi [179]and piña. Her abundant hair about her face increased its transparent pallor, as did the radiance of her great, sad eyes. Beside her were her two friends, and Andeng holding a lily branch.
De Espadaña felt her pulse, examined her tongue, asked a question or two, and nodded his head.

“Sh—she is s—sick, but she can be c—cured.”

Doña Victorina looked proudly at their audience.

“Lichen with m—m—milk, for the m—m—morning, syrup of m—m—marshmallow, and two tablets of cynoglossum.”

“Take courage, Clarita,” said Doña Victorina, approaching the bed, “we have come to cure you. I’m going to present to you our cousin.”

Linares, absorbed, was gazing at those eloquent eyes, which seemed to be searching for some one; he did not hear Doña Victorina.

“Señor Linares,” said the curate, drawing him out of his abstraction, “here is Father Dámaso.”

It was indeed he; but it was not the Father Dámaso of heretofore, so vigorous and alert. He walked uncertainly, and he was pale and sad.[180]
[Contents]

XXXVI.
Projects.

With no word for any one else, Father Dámaso went straight to Maria's bed and took her hand.

"Maria," he said with great tenderness, and tears gushed from his eyes, "Maria, my child, you must not die!"

Maria Clara looked at him with some astonishment. No one of those who knew the Franciscan would have believed him capable of such display of feeling.

He could not say another word, but moved aside the draperies and went out among the plants of Maria's balcony, crying like a child.

"How he loves his god-daughter!" every one thought.

Father Salvi, motionless and silent, watched him intently.

When the father's grief seemed more controlled, Doña Victorino presented young Linares. Father Dámaso, saying nothing, looked him over from head to foot, took the letter, read it without appearing to comprehend, and asked:

"Well, who are you?"

"Alfonso Linares, the godson of your brother-in-law——" stammered the young fellow. Father Dámaso threw back his head and examined him anew, his face clearing.

"What! It's the godson of Carlicos!" he cried, clasping him in his arms. "I had a letter from him some days ago. And it is you? You were not born when I left the country. I did not know you!" And Father Dámaso still held in his strong arms the young man, whose face began to color, perhaps from embarrassment, perhaps from suffocation. [181]Father Dámaso appeared to have completely forgotten his grief.
After the first moments of effusion and questions about Carlicos and Pepa, Father Dámaso asked:

"Let's see, what is it Carlicos wishes me to do for you?"

“I think he says something about it in the letter,” stammered Linares again.

“In the letter? Yes, that’s so! He wishes me to find you employment and a wife. Ah, the employment is easy enough, but as for the wife!—hem!—a wife——”

“Father, that is not so urgent,” said Linares, with confusion.

But Father Dámaso was walking back and forth murmuring: “A wife! A wife!” His face was no longer sad or joyful, but serious and preoccupied. From a distance Father Salvi watched the scene.

“I did not think the thing could cause me so much pain,” Father Dámaso murmured plaintively; “but of two evils choose the least!” Then approaching Linares:

“Come with me, my boy,” he said, “we will talk with Don Santiago.” Linares paled and followed the priest.[182]
[Contents]

XXXVII.
Scrutiny of Conscience.

Long days followed by weary nights were passed by the pillow of the sick girl. After a confession to Father Salvi, Maria Clara had had a relapse, and in her delirium she pronounced no name but that of her mother, whom she had never known. Her friends, her father, her aunt, watched her, and heaped with gifts and with silver for masses the altars of miraculous images. At last, slowly and regularly, the fever began to abate.

The Doctor de Espadaña was stupefied at the virtues of the syrup of marshmallow and the decoction of lichen, prescriptions he had never varied. Doña Victorina was so satisfied with her husband that one day when he stepped on her train, in a rare state of clemency she did not apply to him the usual penal code by pulling out his teeth.

One afternoon, Sinang and Victorina were with Maria; the curate, Captain Tiago, and the Espadañas were talking in the dining-room.

“I’m distressed to hear it,” the doctor was saying; “and Father Dámaso must be greatly disturbed.”

“Where did you say he is to be sent?” asked Linares.

“Into the province of Tabayas,” replied the curate carelessly.

“Maria Clara will be very sorry too,” said Captain Tiago; “she loves him like a father.”

Father Salvi looked at him from the corner of his eye.

“Father,” continued Captain Tiago, “I believe her [183]sickness came from nothing but that trouble the day of the fête.”
“I am of the same opinion, so you have done well in not permitting Señor Ibarra to talk with her; that would only have aggravated her condition.”

“And it is thanks to us alone,” interrupted Doña Victorina, “that Clarita is not already in heaven singing praises with the angels.”

“Amen!” Captain Tiago felt moved to say.

“I think I know whereof I speak,” said the curate, “when I say that the confession of Maria Clara brought about the favorable crisis that saved her life. I do not deny the power of science, but a pure conscience——”

“Pardon,” objected Doña Victorina, piqued; “then cure the wife of the alférez with a confession!”

“A hurt, señora, is not a malady, to be influenced by the conscience,” replied Father Salvi severely; “but a good confession would preserve her in future from such blows as she got this morning.”

“She deserved them!” said Doña Victorina. “She is an insolent woman. In church she did nothing but look at me. I had a mind to ask her what there was curious about my face; but who would soil her lips speaking to these people of no standing?”

The curate, as if he had not heard this tirade, continued: “To finish the cure of your daughter, she should receive the communion to-morrow, Don Santiago. I think she does not need to confess, and yet, if she will once more, this evening——”

“I don’t know,” said Doña Victorina, profiting by the pause to continue her reflections, “I don’t understand how men can marry such frights. One easily sees where that woman came from. She is dying of envy, that shows in her eyes. What does an alférez get?”[184]
“So prepare Maria for confession,” the curate continued, turning to Aunt Isabel.

The good aunt left the group and went to her niece’s room. Maria Clara was still in bed, and pale, very pale; beside her were her two friends.

Sinang was giving her her medicine.

“He has not written to you again?” asked Maria, softly.

“No.”

“He gave you no message for me?”

“No; he only said he was going to make every effort to have the archbishop raise the ban of excommunication——”

The arrival of Aunt Isabel interrupted the conversation.

“The father says you are to prepare yourself for confession, my child,” said she. “Sinang, leave her to examine her conscience. Shall I bring you the ‘Anchor,’ the ‘Bouquet,’ or the ‘Straight Road to Heaven,’ Maria?”

Maria Clara did not reply.

“Well, we mustn’t fatigue you,” said the good aunt consolingly; “I will read you the examination myself, and you will only have to remember your sins.”

“Write him to think of me no more,” murmured the sick girl in Sinang’s ear.

“What!”

But Aunt Isabel came back with her book, and Sinang had to go.

The good aunt drew her chair up to the light, settled her glasses on the tip of her nose, and opened a little book.

“Give good attention, my child: I will begin with the commandments of God; I shall go slowly, so that you may meditate: if you don’t hear well, you must tell me, and I will repeat; you know I’m never weary of working for your good.”

In a voice monotonous and nasal, she began to read. [185]Maria Clara gazed vaguely into space. The first commandment finished, Aunt Isabel observed her listener over her glasses, and appeared satisfied with her sad and meditative air. She coughed piously, and after a long pause began the second. The good old woman read with unction. The terms of the second commandment finished, she again looked at her niece, who slowly turned away her head.
“Bah!” said Aunt Isabel within herself, “as to taking His holy name in vain, the poor thing has nothing to question: pass on to the third.”

And the third commandment sifted and commentated, all the causes of sin against it droned out, she again looked toward the bed. This time she lifted her glasses and rubbed her eyes; she had seen her niece raise her handkerchief, as if to wipe away tears.

“Hm!” said she; “hm! the poor child must have fallen asleep during the sermon.” And putting back her glasses on the tip of her nose, she reflected:

“We shall see if besides not keeping the holy feast days, she has not honored her father and her mother.” And slowly, in a voice more nasal than ever, she read the fourth commandment.

“What a pure soul!” thought the old lady; “she who is so obedient, so submissive! I’ve sinned much more deeply than that, and I’ve never been able to really cry!” And she began the fifth commandment with such enthusiasm that she did not hear the stifled sobs of her niece. It was only when she stopped after the commentaries on wilful homicide, that she perceived the groanings of the sinner. Then in a voice that passed description, and a manner she strove to make menacing, she finished the commentary, and seeing that Maria had not ceased to weep:

“Cry, my child, cry!” she said, going to her bedside; “the more you cry the more quickly will God pardon you. [186]Cry, my child, cry; and beat your breast, but not too hard, for you are ill yet, you know.”

But as if grief had need of mystery and solitude, Maria Clara, finding herself surprised, stopped sobbing little by little and dried her eyes. Aunt Isabel returned to her reading, but the plaint of her audience having ceased, she lost her enthusiasm; the second table of the law made her sleepy, and a yawn broke the nasal monotony.

“No one would have believed it without seeing it,” thought the good woman; “the child sins like a soldier against the first five commandments, and from the sixth to the tenth not so much as a peccadillo. That is contrary to the custom of the rest of us. One sees queer things in these days!” And she lighted a great candle for the Virgin of Antipolo, and two smaller ones for Our Lady of the Rosary and Our Lady of the Pillar. The Virgin of Delaroche was excluded from this illumination: she was to Aunt Isabel an unknown foreigner.

We may not know what passed during the confession in the evening. It was long, and Aunt Isabel, who at a distance was watching over her niece, could see that instead of offering his ear to the sick girl, the curate had his face turned toward her. He went out, pale, with compressed lips. At the sight of

his brow, darkened and moist with sweat, one would have said it was he who had confessed, and absolution had been denied him.

“Maria! Joseph!” said the good aunt, crossing herself, “who can comprehend the girls of to-day!”[187]
[Contents]

XXXVIII.

The Two Women.

Doña Victorina was taking a walk through the pueblo, to see of what sort were the dwellings and the advancement of the indolent Indians. She had put on her most elegant adornments, to impress the provincials, and to show what distance separated them from her sacred person. Giving her arm to her limping husband, she paraded the streets of the pueblo, to the profound amazement of its inhabitants.

“What ugly houses these Indians have!” she began, with a grimace. “One must needs be an Indian to live in them! And how ill-bred the people are! They pass us without uncovering. Knock off their hats, as the curates do, and the lieutenants of the Civil Guard.”

“And if they attack me?” stammered the doctor.

“Are you not a man?”

“Yes, but—but—I am lame.”

Doña Victorina grew cross. There were no sidewalks in these streets, and the dust was soiling the train of her dress. Some young girls who passed dropped their eyes, and did not admire at all as they should her luxurious attire. Sinang’s coachman, who was driving Sinang and her cousin in an elegant tres-por-ciento, had the effrontery to cry out to her “Tabi!” in so audacious a voice that she moved out of the way.

“What a brute of a coachman!” she protested; “I shall tell his master he had better train his servants. Come along, Tiburcio!”[188]
Her husband, fearing a tempest, turned on his heels, and they found themselves face to face with the alférez. Greetings were exchanged, but Doña Victorina’s discontent grew. Not only had the officer said nothing complimentary of her costume, but she believed she detected mockery in his look.

“You ought not to give your hand to a simple alférez,” she said to her husband, when the officer had passed. “You don’t know how to preserve your rank.”

“H—here he is the chief.”

“What does that mean to us? Do we happen to be Indians?”

“You are right,” said Don Tiburcio, not minded to dispute.

They passed the barracks. Doña Consolacion was at the window, as usual dressed in flannel, and puffing her puro. As the house was low, the two women faced each other. The muse examined Doña Victorina from head to foot, protruded her lip, ejected tobacco juice, and turned away her head. This affectation of contempt brought the patience of the doctora to an end. Leaving her husband without support, she went, trembling with rage, powerless to utter a word, and placed herself in front of the alféreza’s window. Doña Consolacion turned her head slowly back, regarded her antagonist with the utmost calm, and spat again with the same cool contempt.

“What’s the matter with you, doña?” she asked.

“Could you tell me, señora, why you stare at me in this fashion? Are you jealous?” Doña Victorina was at last able to say.

“I jealous? And of you?” replied the alféreza calmly. “Yes, I’m jealous of your frizzes.”

“Come away there!” broke in the doctor; “d—d—don’t pay at—t—t—tention to these f—f—follies!”

“Let me alone! I have to give a lesson to this brazenface!” [189]replied the doctora, joggling her husband, who just missed sprawling in the dust.
“Consider to whom you are speaking!” she said haughtily, turning back to Doña Consolacion. “Don’t think I am a provincial or a woman of your class. With us, at Manila, the alférezas are not received; they wait at the door.”

“Ho! ho! most worshipful señora, the alférezas wait at the door! But you receive such paralytics as this gentleman! Ha! ha! ha!”

Had she been less powdered Doña Victorina might have been seen to blush. She started to rush on her enemy, but the sentinel stood in the way. The street was filling with a curious crowd.

“Know that I demean myself in speaking to you; persons of position like me ought not! Will you wash my clothes? I will pay you well. Do you suppose I do not know you are a washerwoman?”

Doña Consolacion sat erect. To be called a washerwoman had wounded her.

“And do you think we don’t know who you are?” she retorted. “My husband has told me! Señora, I, at least——”

But she could not be heard. Doña Victorina, wildly shaking her fists, screamed out:

“Come down, you old hussy, come down and let me tear your beautiful eyes out!”

Rapidly the medusa disappeared from the window; more rapidly yet she came running down the steps, brandishing her husband’s terrible whip. Don Tiburcio, supplicating both, threw himself between, but he could not have prevented the combat, had not the alférez arrived.

“Well, well, señoras!—Don Tiburcio!”

“Give your wife a little more breeding, buy her more [190]beautiful clothes, and if you haven’t the money, steal it from the people of the pueblo; you have soldiers for that!” cried Doña Victorina.
“Señora,” said the alférez, furious, “it is fortunate that I remember you are a woman; if I didn’t, I should trample you down, with all your curls and ribbons!”

“Se—señor alférez!”

“Move on, charlatan! It’s not you who wear the breeches!”

Armed with words and gestures, with cries, insults, and injuries, the two women hurled at each other all there was in them of soil and shame. All four talked at once, and in the multitude of words numerous verities were paraded in the light. If they did not hear all, the crowd of the curious did not fail to be diverted. They were looking forward to battle, but, unhappily for these amateurs of sport, the curate came by and established peace.

“Señoras! señoras! what a scandal! Señor alférez!”

“What are you doing here, hypocrite, carlist!”

“Don Tiburcio, take away your wife! Señora, restrain your tongue!”

Little by little the dictionary of sounding epithets became exhausted. The shameless shrews found nothing left to say to each other, and still threatening, the two couples drew slowly apart, the curate going from one to the other, lavishing himself on both.

“We shall leave for Manila this very day and present ourselves to the captain-general!” said the infuriated Doña Victorina to her husband. “You are no man!”

“But—but, wife, the guards, and I am lame.”

“You are to challenge him, with swords or pistols, or else—or else——” And she looked at his teeth.

“Woman, I’ve never handled——”

Doña Victorina let him go no farther; with a sublime [191]movement she snatched out his teeth, threw them in the dust, and trampled them under her feet. The doctor almost crying, the doctora pelting him with sarcasms, they arrived at the house of Captain Tiago. Linares, who was talking with Maria Clara, was no little disquieted by the abrupt arrival of his cousins. Maria, amid the pillows of her fauteuil, was not less surprised at the new physiognomy of her doctor.
“Cousin,” said Doña Victorina, “you are to go and challenge the alférez this instant; if not——”

“Why?” demanded the astonished Linares.

“You are to go and challenge him this instant; if not, I shall say here, and to everybody, who you are.”

“Doña Victorina!”

The three friends looked at each other.

“The alférez has insulted us. The old sorceress came down with a whip to assault us, and this creature did nothing to prevent it! A man!”

“Hear that!” said Sinang regretfully. “There was a fight, and we didn’t see it!”

“The alférez broke the doctor’s teeth!” added Doña Victorina.

Captain Tiago entered, but he wasn’t given time to get his breath. In few words, with an intermingling of spicy language, Doña Victorina narrated what had passed, naturally trying to put herself in a good light.

“Linares is going to challenge him, do you hear? Or don’t let him marry your daughter. If he isn’t courageous, he doesn’t merit Clarita.”

“What! you are going to marry this gentleman?” Sinang asked Maria, her laughing eyes filling with tears. “I know you are discreet, but I didn’t think you inconstant.”

Maria Clara, white as alabaster, looked with great, [192]frightened eyes from her father to Doña Victorina, from Doña Victorina to Linares. The young man reddened; Captain Tiago dropped his head.
“Help me to my room,” Maria said to her friends, and steadied by their round arms, her head on the shoulder of Victorina, she went out.

That night the husband and wife packed their trunks, and presented their account—no trifle—to Captain Tiago. The next morning they set out for Manila, leaving to the pacific Linares the rôle of avenger.[193]
[Contents]

XXXIX.
The Outlawed.

By the feeble moonlight that penetrates the thick foliage of forest trees, a man was making his way through the woods. His movement was slow but assured. From time to time, as if to get his bearings, he whistled an air, to which another whistler in the distance replied by repeating it.

At last, after struggling long against the many obstacles a virgin forest opposes to the march of man, and most obstinately at night, he arrived at a little clearing, bathed in the light of the moon in its first quarter. Scarcely had he entered it when another man came carefully out from behind a great rock, a revolver in his hand.

“Who are you?” he demanded with authority in Tagalo.

“Is old Pablo with you?” asked the newcomer tranquilly; “if so, tell him Elias is searching for him.”

“You are Elias?” said the other, with a certain respect, yet keeping his revolver cocked. “Follow me!”

They penetrated a cavern, the guide warning the helmsman when to lower his head, when to crawl on all fours. After a short passage they arrived at a sort of room, dimly lighted by pitch torches, where twelve or fifteen men, dirty, ragged, and sinister, were talking low among themselves. His elbows resting on a stone, an old man of sombre face sat apart, looking toward the smoky torches. It was a cavern of tulisanes. When Elias arrived, the men started [194]to rise, but at a gesture from the old man they remained quiet, contenting themselves with examining the newcomer.
“Is it thou, then?” said the old chief, his sad eyes lighting a little at sight of the young man.

“And you are here!” exclaimed Elias, half to himself.

The old man bent his head in silence, making at the same time a sign to the men, who rose and went out, not without taking the helmsman’s measure with their eyes.

“Yes,” said the old man to Elias when they were alone, “six months ago I gave you hospitality in my home; now it is I who receive compassion from you. But sit down and tell me how you found me.”

“As soon as I heard of your misfortunes,” replied Elias slowly, “I set out, and searched from mountain to mountain. I’ve gone over nearly two provinces.” After a short pause in which he tried to read the old man’s thoughts in his sombre face, he went on:

“I have come to make you a proposition. After vainly trying to find some representative of the family which caused the ruin of my own, I have decided to go North, and live among the savage tribes. Will you leave this life you are beginning, and come with me? Let me be a son to you?”

The old man shook his head.

“At my age,” he said, “when one has taken a desperate resolution it is final. When such a man as I, who passed his youth and ripe age laboring to assure his future and that of his children, who submitted always to the will of superiors, whose conscience is clear—when such a man, almost on the border of the tomb, renounces all his past, it is because after ripe reflection he concludes that there is no such thing as peace. Why go to a strange land to drag out my miserable days? I had two sons, a daughter, a home, a fortune. I enjoyed consideration and respect; now I am like a tree stripped of its branches, bare and desolate. And [195]why? Because a man dishonored my daughter; because my sons wished to seek satisfaction from this man, placed above other by his office; because this man, fearing them, sought their destruction and accomplished it. And I have survived; but if I did not know how to defend my sons, I shall know how to avenge them. The day my band is strong enough, I shall go down into the plain and wipe out my vengeance and my life in fire! Either this day will come or there is no God!”

The old man rose, and, his eyes glittering, his voice cavernous, he cried, fastening his hands in his long hair:

“Malediction, malediction upon me, who held the avenging hands of my sons! I was their assassin!”

“I understand you,” said Elias; “I too have a vengeance to satisfy; and yet, from fear of striking the innocent, I choose to forego that.”

“You can; you are young; you have not lost your last hope. I too, I swear it, would not strike the innocent. You see this wound? I got it rather than harm a cuadrillero who was doing his duty.”

“And yet,” said Elias, “if you carry out your purpose, you will bring dreadful woes to our unhappy country. If with your own hands you satisfy your vengeance, your enemies will take terrible reprisals—not from you, not from those who are armed, but from the people, who are always the ones accused. When I knew you in other days, you gave me wise counsels: will you permit me——”

The old man crossed his arms and seemed to attend.

“Señor,” continued Elias, “I have had the fortune to do a great service to a young man, rich, kind of heart, upright, wishing the good of his country. It is said he has relations at Madrid; of that I know nothing, but I know he is the friend of the governor-general. What do you think of interesting [196]him in the cause of the miserable and making him their voice?”
The old man shook his head.

“He is rich, you say. The rich think only of increasing their riches. Not one of them would compromise his peace to go to the aid of those who suffer. I know it, I who was rich myself.”

“But he is not like the others. And he is a young man about to marry, who wishes the tranquillity of his country for the sake of his children’s children.”

“He is a man, then, who is going to be happy. Our cause is not that of fortunate men.”

“No, but it is that of men of courage!”

“True,” said the old man, seating himself again. “Let us suppose he consents to be our mouthpiece. Let us suppose he wins the captain-general, and finds at Madrid deputies who can plead for us; do you believe we shall have justice?”

“Let us try it before we try measures of blood,” said Elias. “It must surprise you that I, an outlaw too, and young and strong, propose pacific measures. It is because I see the number of miseries which we ourselves cause, as well as our tyrants. It is always the unarmed who pay the penalty.”

“And if nothing result from our steps?”

“If we are not heard, if our grievances are made light of, I shall be the first to put myself under your orders.”

The old man embraced Elias, a strange light in his eyes.

“I accept the proposition,” he said; “I know you will keep your word. I will help you to avenge your parents; you shall help me to avenge my sons!”

“Meanwhile, señor, you will do nothing violent.”

“And you will set forth the wrongs of the people; you know them. When shall I have the response?”[197]
“In four days send me a man to the lake shore of San Diego. I will tell him the decision, and name the person on whom I count.”

“Elias will be chief when Captain Pablo is fallen,” said the old man. And he himself accompanied the helmsman out of the cave.[198]
[Contents]

XL.
The Enigma.

The day after the departure of the doctor and the doctora, Ibarra returned to the pueblo. He hastened to the house of Captain Tiago to tell Maria he had been reconciled to the Church. Aunt Isabel, who was fond of the young fellow, and anxious for his marriage with her niece, was filled with joy. Captain Tiago was not at home.

“Come in!” Aunt Isabel cried in her bad Castilian. “Maria, Crisóstomo has returned to favor with the Church; the archbishop has disexcommunicated him!”

But Crisóstomo stood still, the smile froze on his lips, the words he was to say to Maria fled from his mind. Leaning against the balcony beside her was Linares; on the floor lay leafless roses and sampagas. The Spaniard was making garlands with the flowers and leaves from the vines; Maria Clara, buried in her fauteuil, pale and thoughtful, was playing with an ivory fan, less white than her slender hands.

At sight of Ibarra Linares paled, and carmine tinted the cheeks of Maria Clara. She tried to rise, but was not strong enough; she lowered her eyes and let her fan fall.

For some seconds there was an embarrassing silence; then Ibarra spoke.

“I have this moment arrived, and came straight here. You are better than I thought you were.”

One would have said Maria had become mute: her eyes still lowered, she did not say a word in reply. Ibarra looked searchingly at Linares; the timid young man bore the scrutiny with haughtiness.[199]
“I see my arrival was not expected,” he went on slowly. “Pardon me, Maria, that I did not have myself announced. Some day I can explain to you—for we shall still see each other—surely!”

At these last words the girl raised toward her fiancé her beautiful eyes full of purity and sadness, so suppliant and so sweet that Ibarra stood still in confusion.

“May I come to-morrow?” he asked after a moment.

“You know that to me you are always welcome,” she said in a weak voice.

Ibarra left, calm in appearance, but a tempest was in his brain and freezing cold in his heart. What he had just seen and comprehended seemed to him incomprehensible. Was it doubt, inconstancy, betrayal?

“Oh, woman!” he murmured.

Without knowing where he went, he arrived at the ground where the school was going up. Señor Juan hailed him with delight, and showed him what had been done since he went away.

With surprise Ibarra saw Elias among the workmen; the helmsman saluted him, as did the others, and at the same time made him understand that he had something to say to him.

“Señor Juan,” said Ibarra, “will you bring me the list of workmen?” Señor Juan disappeared, and Ibarra approached Elias, who was lifting a great stone and loading it on a cart.

“If you can, señor,” said the helmsman, “give me an hour of conversation, there is something grave of which I want to talk with you. Will you go on the lake early this evening in my boat?”

Ibarra gave a sign of assent and Elias moved away. Señor Juan brought the list, but Ibarra searched it in vain for the name of the helmsman.[200]
[Contents]

XLI.
The Voice of the Persecuted.

The sun was just setting when Ibarra stepped into the little boat on the lake shore. He appeared disturbed.

“Pardon me, señor,” said Elias, “for having asked this favor; I wished to speak to you freely, with no possibility of listeners.”

“And what have you to say?”

They had already shot away from the bank. The sun had disappeared behind the crest of the mountains, and as twilight is of short duration in this latitude, the night was descending rapidly, lighted by a brilliant moon.

“Señor,” replied Elias, “I am the spokesman of many unfortunates.” And briefly he told of his conversation with the chief of the tulisanes, omitting the old man’s doubts and threats.

“And they wish?” asked Ibarra, when he had finished.

“Radical reforms in the guard, the clergy, and the administration of justice.”

“Elias,” said Ibarra, “I know little of you, but I believe you will understand me when I say that though I have friends at Madrid whom I might influence, and though I might interest the captain-general in these people, neither they nor he could bring about such a revolution. And more, I would not take a step in this direction, because I believe what you want reformed is at present a necessary evil.”

“You also, señor, believe in necessary evil?” said Elias [201]with a tremor in his voice. “You think one must go through evil to arrive at good?”
“No; but I look at evil as a violent remedy we sometimes use to cure ourselves of illness.”

“It is a bad medicine, señor, that does away with the symptoms without searching out the cause of the disease. The Municipal Guard exists only to suppress crime by force and terrorizing.”

“The institution may be imperfect, but the terror it inspires keeps down the number of criminals.”

“Rather say that this terror creates new criminals every day,” said Elias. “There are those who have become tulisanes for life. A first offence punished inhumanly, and the fear of further torture separates them forever from society and condemns them to kill or to be killed. The terrorism of the Municipal Guard shuts the doors of repentance, and as a tulisan, defending himself in the mountains, fights to much better advantage than the soldier he mocks, we cannot remedy the evil we have made. Terrorism may serve when a people is enslaved, and the mountains have no caverns; but when a desperate man feels the strength of his arm, and anger possesses him, terrorism cannot put out the fire for which it has itself heaped the fuel.”

“You would seem to speak reasonably, Elias, if one had not already his own convictions. But let me ask you, Who demand these reforms? You know I except you, whom I cannot class with these others; but are they not all criminals, or men ready to become so?”

“Go from pueblo to pueblo, señor, from house to house, and listen to the stifled groanings, and you will find that if you think that, you are mistaken.”

“But the Government must have a body of unlimited power, to make itself respected and its authority felt.”

“It is true, señor, when the Government is at war with [202]the country; but is it not unfortunate that in times of peace the people should be made to feel they are at strife with their rulers? If, however, we prefer force to authority, we should at least be careful to whom we give unlimited power. Such a force in the hands of men ignorant, passionate, without moral training or tried honor, is a weapon thrown to a madman in the middle of an unarmed crowd. I grant the Government must have an arm, but let it choose this arm well; and since it prefers the power it assumes to that the people might give it, let it at least show that it knows how to assume it!”

Elias spoke with passion; his eyes were brilliant, his voice was resonant. His words were followed by silence; the boat, no longer driven forward by the oars, seemed motionless on the surface of the lake; the moon shone resplendent in the sapphire sky; above the far banks the stars glittered.

“And what else do they ask?”

“Reform of the religious orders,—they demand better protection——”

“Against the religious orders?”

“Against their oppression, señor.”

“Do the Philippines forget the debt they owe those men who led them out of error into the true faith? It is a pity we are not taught the history of our country!”

“We must not forget this debt, no! But were not our nationality and independence a dear price with which to cancel it? We have also given the priests our best pueblos, our most fertile fields, and we still give them our savings, for the purchase of all sorts of religious objects. I realize that a pure faith and a veritable love of humanity moved the first missionaries who came to our shores. I acknowledge the debt we owe those noble men; I know that in those days Spain abounded in heroes, of politics as well as religion. But because the ancestors were true men, [203]must we consent to the excesses of their unworthy descendants? Because a great good has been done us, may we not protest against being done a great wrong? The missionaries conquered the country, it is true; but do you think it is through the monks that Spain will keep the Philippines?”
“Yes, and through them only. It is the opinion of all those who have written on the islands.”

“Señor,” said Elias in dejection, “I thank you for your patience. I will take you back to the shore.”

“No,” said Ibarra, “go on; we should know which is right in so important a question.”

“You will excuse me, señor,” said Elias, “I have not eloquence enough to convince you. If I have some education, I am an Indian, and my words would always be suspected. Those who have expressed opinions contrary to mine are Spaniards, and as such disarm in advance all contradiction. Besides, when I see that you, who love your country, you, whose father sleeps below this calm water, you who have been attacked and wronged yourself, have these opinions, I commence to doubt my own convictions, I acknowledge that the people may be mistaken. I must tell these unfortunates who have placed their confidence in men to put it in God or in their own strength.”

“Elias, your words hurt me, and make me, too, have doubts. I have not grown up with the people, and cannot know their needs. I only know what books have taught me. If I take your words with caution, it is because I fear you may be prejudiced by your personal wrongs. If I could know something of your story, perhaps it would alter my judgment. I am mistrustful of theories, am guided rather by facts.”

Elias thought a moment, then he said:

“If this is so, señor, I will briefly tell you my history.”[204]
[Contents]

XLII.
The Family of Elias.

“It is about sixty years since my grandfather was employed as accountant by a Spanish merchant. Although still young, he was married, and had a son. One night the warehouse took fire, and was burned with the surrounding property. The loss was great, incendiarism was suspected, and my grandfather was accused. He had no money to pay for his defence, and he was convicted and condemned to be publicly flogged in the streets of his pueblo. Attached to a horse, he was beaten as he passed each street corner by men, his brothers. The curates, you know, advocate nothing but blows for the discipline of the Indian. When the unhappy man, marked forever with infamy, was liberated, his poor young wife went about seeking work to keep alive her disabled husband and their little child. Failing in this, she was forced to see them suffer, or to live herself a life of shame.”

Ibarra rose to his feet.

“Oh, don’t be disturbed! There was no longer honor or dishonor for her or hers. When the husband’s wounds were healed, they went to hide themselves in the mountains, where they lived for a time, shunned and feared. But my grandfather, less courageous than his wife, could not endure this existence and hung himself. When his body was found, by chance, my grandmother was accused for not reporting his death, and was in turn condemned to be flogged; but in consideration of her state her punishment was deferred. [205]She gave birth to another son, unhappily sound and strong; two months later her sentence was carried out. Then she took her two children and fled into a neighboring province.

“The elder of the sons remembered that he had once been happy. As soon as he was old enough he became a tulisan to avenge his wrongs, and the name of Bâlat spread terror in many provinces. The younger son, endowed by nature with a gentle disposition, stayed with his mother, both living on the fruits of the forest and dressing in the cast-off rags of those charitable enough to give. At length the famous Bâlat fell into the hands of justice, and paid a dreadful penalty for his crimes, to that society which had never done anything to teach him better than to commit them. One morning the young brother, who had been in the forest gathering fruits, came back to

find the dead body of his mother in front of their cabin, the horror-stricken eyes staring upward; and following them with his own, the unhappy boy saw suspended from a limb the bloody head of his brother."

"My God!" cried Ibarra.

"It is perhaps the cry that escaped the lips of my father," said Elias coldly. "Like a condemned criminal, he fled across mountains and valleys. When he thought himself far enough away to have lost his identity, he found work with a rich man of the province of Tayabas. His industry and the sweetness of his disposition gained him favor. Here he stayed, economized, got a little capital, and as he was yet young, thought to be happy. He won the love of a girl of the pueblo, but delayed asking for her hand, fearing that his past might be uncovered. At length, when love's indiscretion bore fruit, to save her reputation he was obliged to risk everything. He asked to marry her, his papers were demanded, and the truth was learned. As [206]the father was rich, he instituted a prosecution. The unhappy young man made no defence, and was sent to the garrison.

"Our mother bore twins, my sister and me. She died while we were yet young, and we were told that our father was dead also. As our grandfather was rich, we had a happy childhood; we were always together, and loved each other as only twins can. I was sent very early to the college of the Jesuits, and my sister to La Concordia, that we might not be completely separated. In time we returned to take possession of our grandfather's property. We had many servants and rich fields. We were both happy, and my sister was affianced to a man she adored.

"By my haughtiness, perhaps, and for pecuniary reasons, I had won the dislike of a distant relative. He threw in my face the obscurity of our origin and the dishonor of our race. Believing it calumny, I demanded satisfaction; the tomb where so many miseries sleep was opened, and the truth came forth to confound me. To crown all, there had been with us many years an old servant, who had suffered all my caprices without complaint. I do not know how our relative found it out, but he brought the old man before the court and made him declare the truth: he was our father. Our happiness was ended. I gave up my inheritance, my sister lost her fiancé, and with our father we left the pueblo, to live where he might. The thought of the unhappiness he had brought upon us shortened our father's days, and my

sister and I were left alone. She could not forget her lover, and little by little I saw her droop. One day she disappeared, and I searched everywhere for her in vain. Six months afterward, I learned that at the time I lost her there had been found on the lake shore of Calamba the body of a young woman drowned or assassinated. A knife, they said, was buried in her breast. From what they told [207]me of her dress and her beauty, I recognized my sister. Since then I have wandered from province to province, my reputation and my story following in time. Many things are attributed to me, often unjustly, but I continue my way and take little account of men. You have my story, and that of one of the judgments of our brothers!"
Elias rowed on in a silence which was for some time unbroken.

"I believe you are not wrong when you say that justice should interest herself in the education of criminals," said Crisóstomo at length; "but it is impossible, it is Utopia; where get the money necessary to create so many new offices?"

"Why not use the priests, who vaunt their mission of peace and love? Can it be more meritorious to sprinkle a child's head with water than to wake, in the darkened conscience of a criminal, that spark lighted by God in every soul to guide it in the search for truth? Can it be more humane to accompany a condemned man to the gallows than to help him in the hard path that leads from vice to virtue? And the spies, the executioners, the guards, do not they too cost money?"

"My friend, if I believed all this, what could I do?"

"Alone, nothing; but if the people sustained you?"

"I shall never be the one to lead the people when they try to obtain by force what the Government does not think it time to give them. If I should see the people armed, I should range myself on the side of the Government. I do not recognize my country in a mob. I desire her good; that is why I build a school. I seek this good through instruction; without light there is no route."

"Without struggle, no liberty; without liberty, no light. You say you know your country little. I believe you. You do not see the conflict coming, the cloud on the horizon: [208]the struggle begun in the sphere of the mind is going to descend to the arena of blood. Listen to the voice of God; woe to those who resist it! History shall not be theirs!"

Elias was transfigured. He stood uncovered, his manly face illumined by the white light of the moon. He shook his mane of hair and continued:

“Do you not see how everything is waking? The sleep has lasted centuries, but some day the lightning will strike, and the bolt, instead of bringing ruin, will bring life. Do you not see minds in travail with new tendencies, and know that these tendencies, diverse now, will some day be guided by God into one way? God has not failed other peoples; He will not fail us!”

The words were followed by solemn silence. The boat, drawn on by the waves, was nearing the bank. Elias was the first to speak.

“What shall I say to those who sent me?”

“That they must wait. I pity their situation, but progress is slow, and there is always much of our own fault in our misfortunes.”

Elias said no more. He lowered his eyes and continued to row. When the boat touched the shore, he took leave of Ibarra.

“I thank you, señor,” he said, “for your kindness to me, and, in your own interest, I ask you to forget me from this day.”

When Ibarra was gone, Elias guided his boat toward a clump of reeds along the shore. His attention seemed absorbed in the thousands of diamonds that rose with the oar, and fell back and disappeared in the mystery of the gentle azure waves. When he touched land, a man came out from among the reeds.

“What shall I say to the captain?” he asked.[209]
“Tell him Elias, if he lives, will keep his word,” replied the helmsman sadly.

“And when will you join us?”

“When your captain thinks the hour has come.”

“That is well; adieu!”

“If I live!” repeated Elias, under his breath.[210]
[Contents]

XLIII.
Il Buon Di si Conosce da Mattina.

While Ibarra and Elias were on the lake, old Tasio, ill in his solitary little house, and Don Filipo, who had come to see him, were also talking of the country. For several days the old philosopher, or fool—as you find him—prostrated by a rapidly increasing feebleness, had not left his bed.

"The country," he was saying to Don Filipo, "isn't what it was twenty years ago."

"Do you think so?"

"Don't you see it?" asked the old man, sitting up. "Ah! you did not know the past. Hear the students of to-day talking. New names are spoken under the arches that once heard only those of Saint Thomas, Suarez, Amat, and the other idols of my day. In vain the monks cry from the chair against the demoralization of the times; in vain the convents extend their ramifications to strangle the new ideas. The roots of a tree may influence the parasites growing on it, but they are powerless against the bird, which, from the branches, mounts triumphant toward the sky!"

The old man spoke with animation, and his eye shone.

"And yet the new germ is very feeble," said the lieutenant. "If they all set about it, the progress already so dearly paid for may yet be choked."

"Choke it? Who? The weak dwarf, man, to choke progress, the powerful child of time and energy? When [211]has he done that? He has tried dogma, the scaffold, and the stake, but *E pur si muove* is the device of progress. Wills are thwarted, individuals sacrificed. What does that mean to progress? She goes her way, and the blood of those who fall enriches the soil whence spring her new shoots. The Dominicans themselves do not escape this law, and they are beginning to imitate the Jesuits, their irreconcilable enemies."
"Do you hold that the Jesuits move with progress?" asked the astonished Don Filipo. "Then why are they so attacked in Europe?"

"I reply as did once an ecclesiastic of old," said the philosopher, laying his head back on the pillow and putting on his mocking air, "that there are three

ways of moving with progress: ahead, beside, behind; the first guide, the second follow, the third are dragged. The Jesuits are of these last. At present, in the Philippines, we are about three centuries behind the van of the general movement. The Jesuits, who in Europe are the reaction, viewed from here represent progress. For instance, the Philippines owe to them the introduction of the natural sciences, the soul of the nineteenth century. As for ourselves, at this moment we are entering a period of strife: strife between the past which grapples to itself the tumbling feudal castle, and the future whose song may be heard afar off, bringing us from distant lands the tidings of good news."

The old man stopped, but seeing the expression of Don Filipo he smiled and went on.

"I can almost divine what you are thinking."

"Can you?"

"You are thinking that I may easily be wrong; to-day I have the fever, and I am never infallible. But it is permitted us to dream. Why not make the dreams agreeable in the last hours of life? You are right: I do dream! Our [212]young men think of nothing but loves and pleasures; our men of riper years have no activity but in vice, serve only to corrupt youth with their example; youth spends its best years without ideal, and childhood wakes to life in rust and darkness. It is well to die. Claudite jam rivos, pueri."
"Is it time for your medicine?" asked Don Filipo, seeing the cloud on the old man's face.

"The parting have no need of medicine, but those who stay. In a few days I shall be gone. The Philippines are in the shadows."[213]
[Contents]

XLIV.
La Gallera.

To keep holy the afternoon of Sunday in Spain, one goes ordinarily to the plaza de toros; in the Philippines, to the gallera. Cock-fights, introduced in the country about a century ago, are to-day one of the vices of the people. The Chinese can more easily deprive themselves of opium than the Filipinos of this bloody sport.

The poor, wishing to get money without work, risks here the little he has; the rich seeks a distraction at the price of whatever loose coin feasts and masses leave him. The education of their cocks costs both much pains, often more than that of their sons.

Since the Government permits and almost recommends it, let us take our part in the sport, sure of meeting friends.

The gallera of San Diego, like most others, is divided into three courts. In the entry is taken the sa pintû, that is, the price of admission. Of this price the Government has a share, and its revenues from this source are some hundred thousand pesos a year. It is said this license fee of vice serves to build schools, open roads, span rivers, and establish prizes for the encouragement of industry. Blessed be vice when it produces so happy results! In this entry are found girls selling buyo, cigars, and cakes. Here gather numerous children, brought by their fathers or uncles, whose duty it is to initiate them into the ways of life.[214]

In the second court are most of the cocks. Here the contracts are made, amid recriminations, oaths, and peals of laughter. One caresses his cock, while another counts the scales on the feet of his, and extends the wings. See this fellow, rage in his face and heart, carrying by the legs his cock, deplumed and dead. The animal which for months has been tended night and day, on which such brilliant hopes were built, will bring a peseta and make a stew. Sic transit gloria mundi! The ruined man goes home to his anxious wife and ragged children. He has lost at once his cock and the price of his industry. Here the least intelligent discuss the sport; those least given to thought extend the wings of cocks, feel their muscles, weigh, and ponder. Some are dressed in elegance, followed and surrounded by the partisans of their cocks; others, ragged and dirty, the stigma of vice on their blighted

faces, follow anxiously the movements of the rich; the purse may get empty, the passion remains. Here not a face that is not animated; in this the Filipino is not indolent, nor apathetic, nor silent; all is movement, passion. One would say they were all devoured by a thirst always more and more excited by muddy water.

From this court one passes to the pit, a circle with seats terraced to the roof, filled during the combats with a mass of men and children; scarcely ever does a woman risk herself so far. Here it is that destiny distributes smiles and tears, hunger and joyous feasts.

Entering, we recognize at once the gobernadorcillo, Captain Basilio, and José, the man with the scar, so cast down by the death of his brother. And here comes Captain Tiago, dressed like the sporting man, in a canton flannel shirt, woollen trousers, and a jipijapa hat. He is followed by two servants with his cocks. A combat is soon arranged between one of these and a famous cock of Captain Basilio's. [215]The news spreads, and a crowd gathers round, examining, considering, forecasting, betting.
While men were searching their pockets for their last cuarto, or in lieu of it were engaging their word, promising to sell the carabao, the next crop, and so forth, two young fellows, brothers apparently, looked on with envious eyes. José watched them by stealth, smiling evilly. Then making the pesos sound in his pocket, he passed the brothers, looking the other way and crying:

"I pay fifty; fifty against twenty for the lásak!"

The brothers looked at each other discontentedly.

"I told you not to risk all the money," said the elder. "If you had listened to me——"

The younger approached José and timidly touched his arm.

"What! It's you?" he cried, turning and feigning surprise. "Does your brother accept my proposition?"

"He won't do it. But if you would lend us something, as you say you know us——"

José shook his head, shifted his position, and replied:

“Yes, I know you; you are Társilo and Bruno; and I know that your valiant father died from the club strokes of these soldiers. I know you don’t think of vengeance——”

“Don’t concern yourself with our history,” said the elder brother, joining them; “that brings misfortune. If we hadn’t a sister, we should have been hanged long ago!”

“Hanged! Only cowards are hanged. Besides, the mountain isn’t so far.”

“A hundred against fifty for the bûlik!” cried some one passing.

“Loan us four pesos—three—two,” begged Bruno. José again shook his head.

“Sh! the money isn’t mine. Don Crisóstomo gave it to me for those who are willing to serve him. But I see you [216]are not like your father; he was courageous. The man who is not must not expect to divert himself.” And he moved away.
“See!” said Bruno, “he’s talking with Pedro; he’s giving him a lot of money!” And in truth José was counting silver pieces into the palm of Sisa’s husband.

Társilo was moody and thoughtful; with his shirt sleeve he wiped the sweat from his forehead.

“Brother,” said Bruno, “I’m going, if you don’t; our father must be avenged!”

“Wait,” said Társilo, gazing into his eyes—they were both pale—“I’m going with you. You are right: our father must be avenged!” But he did not move, and again wiped his brow.

“What are you waiting for?” demanded Bruno impatiently.

“Don’t you think—our poor sister——”

“Bah! Isn’t Don Crisóstomo the chief, and haven’t we seen him with the governor-general? What risk do we run?”

“And if we die?”

“Did not our poor father die under their clubs?”

“You are right!”

The brothers set out to find José, but hesitation again possessed Társilo.

“No; come away! we’re going to ruin ourselves!” he cried.

“Go on if you want to. I shall accept!”

“Bruno!”

Unhappily a man came up and asked:

“Are you betting? I’m for the lásak.”

“How much?” demanded Bruno.

The man counted his pieces.

“I have two hundred; fifty against forty!”

“No!” said Bruno resolutely.[217]
“Good! Fifty against thirty!”

“Double it if you will.”

“A hundred against sixty, then!”

“Agreed! Wait while I go for the money,” and turning to his brother he said:

“Go away if you want to; I shall stay!”

Társilo reflected. He loved Bruno, and he loved sport.

“I am with you,” he said. They found José.

“Uncle,” said Társilo, “how much will you give?” “I’ve told you already; if you will promise to find others to help surprise the quarters, I’ll give you thirty pesos each, and ten to each companion. If all goes well, they will each receive a hundred, and you double. Don Crisóstomo is rich!”

“Agreed!” cried Bruno; “give us the money!”

“I knew you were like your father! Come this way, so that those who killed him cannot hear us,” said José. And drawing them into a corner, he added as he counted out the money:

“Don Crisóstomo has come and brought the arms. To-morrow night at eight o’clock meet me in the cemetery. I will give you the final word. Go find your companions.” And he left them.

The brothers appeared to have exchanged rôles. Társilo now seemed undisturbed; Bruno was pale. They went back to the crowd, which was leaving the circle for the raised seats. Little by little the place became silent. Only the soltadores were left in the ring holding two cocks, with exaggerated care, looking out for wounds. The silence became solemn; the spectators became mere caricatures of men; the fight was about to begin.
[218]
[Contents]

XLV.
A Call.

Two days later Brother Salvi presented himself at the house of Captain Tiago. The Franciscan was more gaunt and pale than usual; but as he went up the steps a strange light shone in his eyes, and his lips parted in a strange smile. Captain Tiago kissed his hand, and took his hat and cane, smiling beatifically.

“I bring good news,” said the curate as he entered the drawing-room; “good news for everybody. I have letters from Manila confirming the one Señor Ibarra brought me, so that I believe, Don Santiago, the obstacle is quite removed.”

Maria Clara, seated at the piano, made a movement to rise, but her strength failed her and she had to sit down again. Linares grew pale; Captain Tiago lowered his eyes.

“The young man seems to me very sympathetic,” said the curate. “At first I misjudged him. He is impulsive, but when he commits a fault, he knows so well how to atone for it that one is forced to forgive him. If it were not for Father Dámaso——” And the curate flashed a glance at Maria Clara. She was listening with all her being, but did not take her eyes off her music, in spite of the pinches that were expressing Sinang’s joy. Had they been alone they would have danced.

“But Father Dámaso has said,” continued the curate, without losing sight of Maria Clara, “that as godfather he could [219]not permit; but, indeed, I believe if Señor Ibarra will ask his pardon everything will arrange itself.” Maria rose, made an excuse, and with Victorina left the room.

“And if Father Dámaso does not pardon him?” asked Don Santiago in a low voice.

“Then Maria Clara must decide. But I believe the matter can be arranged.”

The sound of an arrival was heard, and Ibarra entered. His coming made a strange impression. Captain Tiago did not know whether to smile or weep.

Father Salvi rose and offered his hand so affectionately that Crisóstomo could scarcely repress a look of surprise.

“Where have you been all day?” demanded wicked Sinang. “We asked each other: ‘What can have taken that soul newly rescued from perdition?’ and each of us had her opinion.”

“And am I to know what each opinion was?”

“No, not yet! Tell me where you went, so I can see who made the best guess.”

“That’s a secret too; but I can tell you by yourself if these gentlemen will permit.”

“Certainly, certainly?” said Father Salvi. Sinang drew Crisóstomo to the other end of the great room.

“Tell me, little friend,” said he, “is Maria angry with me?”

“I don’t know. She says you had best forget her, and then she cries. This morning when we were wondering where you were I said to tease her: ‘Perhaps he has gone a-courting.’ But she was quite grave, and said: ‘It is God’s will!’”

“Tell Maria I must see her alone,” said Ibarra, troubled.

“It will be difficult, but I’ll try to manage it.”[220]
“And when shall I know?”

“To-morrow. But you are going without telling me the secret!”

“So I am. Well, I went to the pueblo of Los Baños to see about some cocoanut trees!”

“What a secret!” cried Sinang aloud in a tone of a usurer despoiled.

“Take care, I really don’t want you to speak of it.”

“I’ve no desire to,” said Sinang scornfully. “If it had been really of importance I should have told my friends; but cocoanuts, cocoanuts, who cares about cocoanuts!” and she ran off to find Maria.

Conversation languished, and Ibarra soon took his leave. Captain Tiago was torn between the bitter and the sweet. Linares said nothing. Only the curate affected gayety and recounted tales.[221]

[Contents]

XLVI.
A Conspiracy.

The bell was announcing the time of prayer the evening after. At its sound every one stopped his work and uncovered. The laborer coming from the fields checked his song; the woman in the streets crossed herself; the man caressed his cock and said the Angelus, that chance might favor him. And yet the curate, to the great scandal of pious old ladies, was running through the street toward the house of the alférez. He dashed up the steps and knocked impatiently. The alférez opened.

“Ah, father, I was just going to see you; your young buck——”

“I’ve something very important——” began the breathless curate.

“I can’t allow the fences to be broken; if he comes back, I shall fire on him.”

“Who knows whether to-morrow you will be alive,” said the curate, going on toward the reception-room.

“What? You think that youngster is going to kill me?”

“Señor alférez, the lives of all of us are in danger!”

“What?”

The curate pointed to the door, which the alférez closed in his customary fashion.

“Now, go ahead,” he said calmly.

“Did you see how I ran? When I thus forget myself, there is some grave reason.”

“And this time it is——”[222]
The curate approached him and spoke low.

“Do you—know—of nothing—new?”

The alférez shrugged his shoulders.

“Are you speaking of Elias?”

“No, no! I’m speaking of a great peril!”

“Well, finish then!” cried the exasperated alférez.

The curate lowered his voice mysteriously:

“I have discovered a conspiracy!”

The alférez gave a spring and looked at the curate in stupefaction.

“A terrible conspiracy, well organized, that is to break out to-night!”

The alférez rushed across the room, took down his sabre from the wall, and grasped his revolver.

“Whom shall I arrest?” he cried.

“Be calm! There is plenty of time, thanks to the haste with which I came. At eight o’clock——”

“They shall be shot, all of them!”

“Listen! It is a secret of the confessional, discovered to me by a woman. At eight o’clock they are to surprise the barracks, sack the convent, and assassinate all the Spaniards.”

The alférez stood dumbfounded.

“Be ready for them; ambush your soldiers; send me four guards for the convent! You will earn your promotion to-night! I only ask you to make it known that it was I who warned you.”

“It shall be known, father; it shall be known, and, perhaps, it will bring down a mitre!” replied the alférez, his eyes on the sleeves of his uniform.

While this conversation was in progress, Elias was running toward the house of Ibarra. He entered and was shown to the laboratory, where Crisóstomo was passing the time until the hour of his appointment with Maria Clara.[223]

“Ah! It is you, Elias?” he said, without noticing the tremor of the helmsman. “See here! I’ve just made a discovery: this piece of bamboo is

non-combustible."

"Señor, there is no time to talk of that; take your papers and flee!"

Ibarra looked up amazed, and, seeing the gravity of the helmsman's face, let fall the piece of bamboo.

"Leave nothing behind that could compromise you, and may an hour from this time find you in a safer place than this!"

"What does all this mean?"

"That there is a conspiracy on foot which will be attributed to you. I have this moment been talking with a man hired to take part in it."

"Did he tell you who paid him?"

"He said it was you."

Ibarra stared in stupid amazement.

"Señor, you haven't a moment to lose. The plot is to be carried out to-night."

Crisóstomo still gazed at Elias, as if he did not understand.

"I learned of it too late; I don't know the leaders; I can do nothing. Save yourself, señor!"

"Where can I go? I am due now at Captain Tiago's," said Ibarra, beginning to come out of his trance.

"To another pueblo, to Manila, anywhere! Destroy your papers! Fly, and await events!"

"And Maria Clara? No! Better die!"

Elias wrung his hands.

"Prepare for the accusation, at all events. Destroy your papers!"

"Aid me then," said Crisóstomo, in almost helpless bewilderment. "They are in these cabinets. My father's letters might compromise me. You will know them by the [224]addresses." And he tore open one drawer after

another. Elias worked to better purpose, choosing here, rejecting there. Suddenly he stopped, his pupils dilated; he turned a paper over and over in his hand, then in a trembling voice he asked:
“Your family knew Don Pedro Eibarramendia?”

“He was my great-grandfather.”

“Your great-grandfather?” repeated Elias, livid.

“Yes,” said Ibarra mechanically, and totally unobservant of Elias. “The name was too long; we cut it.”

“Was he a Basque?” asked Elias slowly.

“Yes; but what ails you?” said Crisóstomo, looking round and recoiling before the hard face and clenched fists of Elias.

“Do you know who Don Pedro Eibarramendia was? Don Pedro Eibarramendia was the wretch who caused all our misfortune! I have long been searching for his descendants; God has delivered you into my hands! Look at me! Do you think I have suffered? And you live, and you love, and have a fortune and a home; you live, you live!” and, beside himself, he ran toward a collection of arms on the wall. But no sooner had he reached down two poniards than he dropped them, looking blindly at Ibarra, who stood rigid.

“What was I going to do?” he said under his breath, and he fled like a madman.[225]
[Contents]

XLVII.
The Catastrophe.

Captain Tiago, Aunt Isabel, and Linares were dining. Maria Clara had said she was not hungry, and was at the piano with Sinang. The two girls had arranged this moment for meeting Ibarra away from too watchful eyes. The clock struck eight.

“He’s coming! Listen!” cried the laughing Sinang.

He entered, white and sad. Maria Clara, in alarm, started toward him, but before any one could speak a fusilade sounded in the street; then random pistol shots, and cries and clamor. Crisóstomo seemed glued to the floor. The diners came running in crying: “The tulisanes! The tulisanes!” Aunt Isabel fell on her knees half dead from fright, Captain Tiago was weeping. Some one rushed about fastening the windows. The tumult continued outside; then little by little there fell a dreadful silence. Presently the alférez was heard crying out as he ran through the street:

“Father Salvi! Father Salvi!”

“Mercy!” exclaimed Aunt Isabel. “The alférez is asking for confession!”

“The alférez is wounded!” murmured Linares, with an expression of the utmost relief.

“The tulisanes have killed the alférez! Maria, Sinang, into your chamber! Barricade the door!”

In spite of the protests of Aunt Isabel, Ibarra went out into the street. Everything seemed turning round and round him; his ears rang; he could scarcely move his limbs. [226]Spots of blood, flashes of light and darkness alternated before his eyes. The streets were deserted, but the barracks were in confusion, and voices came from the tribunal, that of the alférez dominating all the others. Ibarra passed unchallenged, and reached his home, where his servants were anxiously watching for him.
“Saddle me the best horse and go to bed,” he said to them.

He entered his cabinet and began to pack a valise. He had put in his money and jewels and Maria’s picture and was gathering up his papers when there

came three resounding knocks at the house door.

“Open in the name of the King! Open or we force the door!” said an imperious voice. Ibarra armed himself and looked toward the window; then changed his mind, threw down his revolver, and went to the door. Three guards immediately seized him.

“I make you prisoner in the name of the King!” said the sergeant.

“Why?”

“You will learn at the tribunal; I am forbidden to talk with you.”

“I am at your disposition. It will not be for, I suppose, long.”

“If you promise not to try to escape us, we may leave your hands free; the alférez grants you that favor.”

Crisóstomo took his hat and followed the guards, leaving his servants in consternation.

Elias, after leaving the house of Ibarra, ran like a madman, not knowing whither. He crossed the fields and reached the wood. He was fleeing from men and their habitations; he was fleeing from light; the moon made him suffer. He buried himself in the mysterious silence of the wood. The birds stirred, wakened from their sleep; owls [227]flew from branch to branch, screeching or looking at him with great, round eyes. Elias did not see or hear them; he thought he was followed by the irate shades of his ancestors. From every branch hung the bleeding head of Bâlat. At the foot of every tree he stumbled against the cold body of his grandmother; among the shadows swung the skeleton of his infamous grandfather; and the skeleton, the body, and the bleeding head cried out: “Coward! Coward!”

He ran on. He left the mountain and went down to the lake, moving feverishly along the shore; his wandering eyes became fixed upon a point on the tranquil surface, and there, surrounded by a silver nimbus and rocked by the tide, stood a shade which he seemed to recognize. Yes, that was her hair, so long and beautiful; yes, that was her breast, gaping from the poniard stroke. And the wretched man, kneeling in the sand, stretched out his arms to the cherished vision:

“Thou! Thou, too!” he cried.

His eyes fixed on the apparition, he rose, entered the water and descended the gentle slope of the beach. Already he was far from the bank; the waves lapped his waist; but he went on fascinated. The water reached his breast. Did he know it? Suddenly a volley tore the air; the night was so calm that the rifle shots sounded clear and sharp. He stopped, listened, came to himself; the shade vanished; the dream was gone. He perceived that he was in the lake, level with his eyes across the tranquil water he saw the lights in the poor cabins of fishermen. Everything came back to him. He made for the shore and went rapidly toward the pueblo.

San Diego was deserted; the houses were closed; even the dogs had hidden themselves. The glittering light that bathed everything detached the shadows boldly, making the solitude still more dreary.[228]

Fearing to encounter the guards, Elias scaled fences and hedges, and so, making his way through the gardens, reached the home of Ibarra. The servants were around the door lamenting the arrest of their master. Elias learned what had happened, and made feint of going away, but returned to the back of the house, jumped the wall, climbed into a window and made his way to the laboratory. He saw the papers, the arms taken down, the bags of money and jewels, Maria's picture, and had a vision of Ibarra surprised by the soldiers. He meditated a moment and decided to bury the things of value in the garden. He gathered them up, went to the window, and saw gleaming in the moonlight the casques and bayonets of the guard. His plans were quickly laid. He hid about his person the money and jewels, and, after an instant's hesitation, the picture of Maria. Then, heaping all the papers in the middle of the room, he saturated them with oil from a lamp, threw the lighted candle in the midst, and sprang out of the window. It was none too soon: the guards were forcing entrance against the protests of the servants.

But dense smoke made its way through the house and tongues of flame began to break out. Soldiers and servants together cried fire and rushed toward the cabinet, but the flames had reached the chemicals, and their explosion drove every one back. The water the servants could bring was useless, and the house stood so apart that their cries brought no aid. The flames leaped upward amid great spirals of smoke; the house, long respected by the elements, was now their prisoner.[229]

[Contents]

XLVIII.
Gossip.

It was not yet dawn. The street in which were the barracks and tribunal was still deserted; none of its houses gave a sign of life. Suddenly the shutter of a window opened with a bang and a child's head appeared, looking in all directions, the little neck stretched to its utmost—plas! It was the sound of a smart slap in contact with the fresh human skin. The child screwed up his face, shut his eyes, and disappeared from the window, which was violently closed again.

But the example had been given: the two bangs of the shutter had been heard. Another window opened, this time with precaution, and the wrinkled and toothless head of an old woman looked stealthily out. It was Sister Putá, the old dame who had caused such a commotion during Father Dámaso's sermon. Children and old women are the representatives of curiosity in the world; the children want to know, the old women to live over again. The old sister stayed longer than the child, and gazed into the distance with contracted brows. Timidly a skylight opened in the house opposite, giving passage to the head and shoulders of sister Rufa. The two old women looked across at each other, smiled, exchanged gestures, and signed themselves.

"Since the sack of the pueblo by Bâlat I've not known such a night!" said Sister Putá.

"What a firing! They say it was the band of old Pablo."

"Tulisanes? Impossible! I heard it was the cuadrilleros [230]against the guards; that's why Don Filipo was arrested."
"They say at least fourteen are dead."

Other windows opened and people were seen exchanging greetings and gossip.

By the light of the dawn, which promised a splendid day, soldiers could now be seen dimly at the end of the street, like gray silhouettes coming and going.

“Do you know what it was?” asked a man, with a villainous face.

“Yes, the cuadrilleros.”

“No, señor, a revolt!”

“What revolt? The curate against the alférez?”

“Oh, no; nothing of that kind. It was an uprising of the Chinese.”

“The Chinese!” repeated all the listeners, with great disappointment.

“That’s why we don’t see one!”

“They are all dead!”

“I—I suspected they had something on foot!”

“I saw it, too. Last night——”

“What a pity they are all dead before Christmas!” cried Sister Rufa. “We shall not get their presents!”

The streets began to show signs of life. First the dogs, pigs, and chickens began to circulate; then some little ragged boys, keeping hold of each other’s hands, ventured to approach the barracks. Two or three old women crept after them, their heads wrapt in handkerchiefs knotted under their chins, pretending to tell their beads, so as not to be driven back by the soldiers. When it was certain that one might come and go without risking a pistol shot, the men commenced to stroll out. Affecting indifference and stroking their cocks, they finally got as far as the tribunal.

Every quarter hour a new version of the affair was circulated. [231]Ibarra with his servants had tried to carry off Maria Clara, and in defending her, Captain Tiago had been wounded. The number of dead was no longer fourteen, but thirty. At half-past seven the version which received most credit was clear and detailed.

“I’ve just come from the tribunal,” said a passer, “where I saw Don Filipo and Don Crisóstomo prisoners. Well, Bruno, son of the man who was beaten to death, has confessed everything. You know, Captain Tiago is to marry his daughter to the young Spaniard. Don Crisóstomo wanted revenge, and planned to massacre all the Spaniards. His band attacked the convent

and the barracks. They say many of them escaped. The guards burned Don Crisóstomo's house, and if he hadn't been arrested, they would have burned him, too."

"They burned the house?"

"You can still see the smoke from here," said the narrator.

Everybody looked: a column of smoke was rising against the sky. Then the comments began, some pitying, some accusing.

"Poor young man!" cried the husband of Sister Putá.

"What!" cried the sister. "You are ready to defend a man that heaven has so plainly punished? You'll find yourself arrested too. You uphold a falling house!"

The husband was silent; the argument had told.

"Yes," went on the old woman. "After striking down Father Dámaso, there was nothing left but to kill Father Salvi!"

"But you can't deny he was a good child."

"Yes, he was good," replied the old woman; "but he went to Europe, and those who go to Europe come back heretics, the curates say."

"Oho!" said the husband, taking his advantage. "And [232]the curate, and all the curates, and the archbishop, and the pope, aren't they all Spaniards? What? And are they heretics?"
Happily for Sister Putá, the conversation was cut short. A servant came running, pale and horror-stricken.

"A man hung—in our neighbor's garden!" she gasped.

A man hung! Nobody stirred.

"Let's come and see," said the old man, rising.

"Don't go near him," cried Sister Putá, "'twill bring us misfortune. If he's hung, so much the worse for him!"

“Let me see him, woman. You, Juan, go and inform them at the tribunal; he may not be dead.” And the old man went off, the women, even Sister Putá, following at a distance, full of fear, but also of curiosity.

Hanging from the branch of a sandal tree in the garden a human body met their gaze. The brave man examined it.

“We must wait for the authorities; he’s been dead a long time,” he said.

Little by little the women drew near.

“It’s the new neighbor,” they whispered. “See the scar on his face?”

In half an hour the authorities arrived.

“People are in a great hurry to die!” said the directorcillo, cocking his pen behind his ear, and he began his investigation.

Meanwhile a peasant wearing a great salakat on his head and having his neck muffled was examining the body and the cord. He noticed several evidences that the man was dead before he was hung. The curious countryman noticed also that the clothing seemed recently torn and was covered with dust.

“What are you looking at?” demanded the directorcillo, who had gathered all his evidence.

“I was looking, señor, to see if I knew him,” stammered [233]the man, half uncovering, in which he managed to lower his salakat even farther over his eyes.
“But didn’t you hear that it is a certain José? You must be asleep!”

Everybody laughed. The confused countryman stammered something else and went away. When he had reached a safe distance, he took off his disguise and resumed the stature and gait of Elias.[234]
[Contents]

XLIX.
Væ Victis.

With threatening air the guards marched back and forth before the door of the town hall, menacing with the butt of their rifles intrepid small boys, who came and raised themselves on tiptoe to see through the gratings.

The court room had not the same appearance as the day of the discussion of the fête. The guards and the cuadrilleros spoke low; the alférez paced the room, looking angrily at the door from time to time. In a corner yawned Doña Consolacion, her steely eyes riveted on the door leading into the prison. The arm-chair under the picture of His Majesty was empty.

It was almost nine o'clock when the curate arrived.

"Well," said the alférez, "you haven't kept us waiting!"

"I did not wish to be here," said the curate, ignoring the tone of the alférez. "I am very nervous."

"I thought it best to wait for you," said the alférez. "We have eight here," he went on, pointing toward the door of the prison; "the one called Bruno died in the night. Are you ready to examine the two unknown prisoners?"

The curate sat down in the arm-chair.

"Let us go on," he said.

"Bring out the two in the cepo!" ordered the alférez in as terrible a voice as he could command. Then turning to the curate:

"We skipped two holes."

For the benefit of those not acquainted with the instruments [235]of torture of the Philippines, we will say that the cepo, a form of stocks, is one of the most innocent; but by skipping enough holes, the position is made most trying. It is, however, a torture that can be long endured.

The jailor drew the bolt and opened the door. A sickening odor escaped, and a match lighted by one of the guards went out in the vitiated air; when it was possible to take in a candle, one could see dimly, from the rooms outside, the forms of men crouching or standing. The cepo was opened.

A dark figure came out between two soldiers; it was Társilo, the brother of Bruno. His torn clothing let his splendid muscles show. The other prisoner brought out was weeping and lamenting.

“What is your name?” the alférez demanded of Társilo.

“Társilo Alasigan.”

“What did Don Crisóstomo promise you for attacking the convent?”

“I have never had any communication with Don Crisóstomo.”

“Don’t attempt to deny it: what other reason had you for joining the conspiracy?”

“You had killed our father, we wished to avenge him, nothing more. Go find two of your guards. They’re at the foot of the precipice, where we threw them. You may kill me now, you will learn nothing more.”

There was silence and general surprise.

“You will name your accomplices,” cried the alférez, brandishing his cane.

The accused man smiled disdainfully. The alférez talked apart with the curate.

“Take him where the bodies are,” he ordered.

In a corner of the patio, on an old cart, five bodies were heaped under a piece of soiled matting.[236]
“Do you know them?” asked the alférez, lifting the covering. Társilo did not reply. He saw the body of Sisa’s husband, and that of his brother, pierced through with bayonet strokes. His face grew darker, and a great sigh escaped him; but he was mute.

“Beat him till he confesses or dies!” cried the exasperated alférez.

They led him back where the other prisoner, with chattering teeth, was invoking the saints.

“Do you know this man?” demanded Father Salvi.

“I never saw him before,” replied Társilo, looking at the poor wretch with faint compassion.

“Fasten him to the bench; gag him!” ordered the alférez, trembling with rage. When this was done, a guard began his sad task.

Father Salvi, pale and haggard, rose trembling, and left the tribunal. In the street he saw a girl, leaning against the wall, rigid, motionless, her eyes far away. The sun shone full down on her. She seemed not to breathe but to count, one after another, the muffled blows inside. It was Társilo’s sister.

The torture continued until the soldier, breathless, let his arm fall, and the alférez ordered his victim released. But Társilo still refused to speak. Then Doña Consolacion whispered in her husband’s ear; he nodded.

“To the well with him!” he said.

The Filipinos know what that means. In Tagalo it is called timbaîn. We do not know who invented this judiciary process, but it must belong to antiquity. Truth coming out of a well is perhaps a sarcastic interpretation.

In the middle of the patio of the tribunal was a picturesque well curb of uncut stones. It had a rustic crank of bamboo; its water was slimy and putrid. All sorts of refuse had been thrown around it and in it.[237]
Toward this Társilo was led. He was very pale, and his lips trembled, if he was not praying. The pride he had shown appeared now to be crushed out; he seemed resigned to suffer. The poor wretch looked enviously at the pile of bodies, and sighed heavily.

“Speak then!” said the directorcillo. “You will be hung anyway. Why not die without so much suffering?” But Társilo remained mute.

When the well was reached, they bound his feet. He was to be let down head foremost. He was fastened to the curb; the crank turned, and his body disappeared. The alférez noted the seconds with his watch. At the signal the body was drawn up, too pitiable to describe; but Társilo was still mute. Again he was let down, again he refused to speak; when he was drawn up the third time, he no longer breathed.

His torturers looked at each other in consternation. The alférez ordered the body taken down, and they all examined it for signs of life; but there were

none.

“See,” said a cuadrillero, at last, “he has strangled himself with his tongue!”

“Put the body with the others,” ordered the alférez nervously. “We must examine the other unknown prisoner.”[238]
[Contents]

L.
Accurst.

The news spread that the prisoners were to be taken to the capital, and members of their families ran wildly from convent to barracks, from barracks to tribunal, but found no consolation anywhere. The curate was said to be ill. The guards dealt roughly with the supplicating women, and the gobernadorcillo was more useless than ever. The friends of the accused, therefore, had collected near the prison, waiting for them to be brought out. Doray, Don Filipo's young wife, wandered back and forth, her child in her arms, both crying. The Capitana Tinay called on her son Antonio, and brave Capitana Maria watched the grating behind which were her twins, her only children.

At two in the afternoon, an uncovered cart drawn by two oxen stopped in front of the tribunal. It was surrounded, and there were loud threats of breaking it.

"Don't do that!" cried Capitana Maria; "do you wish them to go on foot?" In a few moments, twenty soldiers came out and surrounded the ox-cart; then the prisoners appeared. The first was Don Filipo, who smiled at his wife. Doray responded by bitter sobs, and would have rushed to her husband, had not the guards held her back. The son of Capitana Tinay was crying like a child, which did not help to check the lamentations of his family. The twins were calm and grave. Ibarra came last. He walked between two guards, his hand free; his eyes sought on all sides for a friendly face.[239]
"He is the guilty one!" cried numerous voices. "He is the guilty one, and his hands are unbound!"

"Bind my arms," said Ibarra to his guards.

"We have no orders."

"Bind me!"

The soldiers obeyed.

The alférez appeared on horseback, armed to the teeth, and followed by an escort of soldiers. The prisoners' friends saluted them with affectionate words; only Ibarra was friendless.

"What has my husband done to you?" sobbed Doray. "See my child; you have robbed him of his father!"

Grief began to turn to hate against the man who was said to have provoked the uprising.

The alférez gave the order to start.

"Coward!" cried a woman, as the cart moved off. "While the others fought, you were in hiding! Coward!"

"Curses on you!" cried an old man, running after. "Cursed be the gold heaped up by your family to take away our peace. Accurst! accurst!"

"May you be hung, heretic!" cried a woman, picking up a stone and throwing it after him. Her example was promptly followed, and a shower of dust and pebbles beat against the unhappy man. Crisóstomo bore this injustice without a sign. It was the farewell of his beloved country. He bent his head and sat motionless. Perhaps he was thinking of a man beaten in the pueblo streets; perhaps of the body of a girl, washed up by the waves.

The alférez felt obliged to drive away the crowd, but stones did not cease to fall, nor insult to sound. One mother only did not curse Ibarra; the Capitana Maria watched her sons go, with compressed lips and eyes full of silent tears.

Of all the people in the open windows as he passed, none [240]but the indifferent and curious showed Ibarra the least compassion. All his friends had deserted him, even Captain Basilio, who had forbidden Sinang to weep. When Crisóstomo passed the smoking ruins of his home, that home where he was born, and spent his happy childhood and youth, the tears, long repressed, gushed from his eyes, and bound as he was, he had to experience the bitterness of showing a grief that could not rouse the slightest sympathy. From a hill, an old man, pale and thin, wrapped in a mantle, and leaning on a stick, watched the sad procession. At the news of what had happened, old Tasio had left his bed, and tried to go to the pueblo, but his strength had

failed him. He followed the cart with his eyes, until it disappeared in the distance. Then, after resting a while in thought, he got up painfully, and started toward his home, halting for breath at almost every step. The next day some shepherds found him dead under the shadow of his solitary house.
[241]
[Contents]

LI.
Patriotism and Interest.

The telegraph had secretly transmitted to Manila the news of the uprising, and thirty-six hours later, the newspapers, their accounts expanded, corrected, and mutilated by the attorney-general, talked about it with much mystery and no little menace. Meanwhile the private accounts, coming out of the convents, had gone from mouth to mouth, to the great alarm of those who heard them. The fact, distorted in countless versions, was accepted as true with more or less readiness, according to its fitness to the passions and ideas of the different hearers.

Though public tranquillity was not disturbed, the peace of the hearthstones became like that of a fish-pond, all on top; underneath was commotion. Crosses, gold lace, office, power, honors of all kinds began to hover over one part of the population, like butterflies in a golden sunshine. For the others a dark cloud rose on the horizon, and against this ashy background stood in relief bars, chains, and the fateful arms of the gibbet. Destiny presented the event to the Manila imagination, like certain Chinese fans: one face painted black, the other gilded, and gorgeous with birds and flowers.

There was great agitation in the convents. The provincials ordered their carriages, and held secret conferences; then presented themselves at the palace, to offer their support to the imperiled government.

“A Te Deum, a Te Deum!” said a monk in one convent. [242]“Through the goodness of God, our worth is made manifest in these perilous times!”
“This petty general, this prophet of evil, will gnaw his moustaches after this little lesson,” said another.

“What would have become of him without the religious orders?”

“The papers almost go to the point of demanding a mitre for Brother Salvi.”

“And he will get it! He’s consumed with desire for it!”

“Do you think so?”

“Why shouldn’t he be? In these days mitres are given for the asking.”

“If mitres had eyes, and could see on what craniums——”

We spare our readers other comments of this nature. Let us enter the home of a private citizen, and as we know few people at Manila, we will knock at the door of Captain Tinong, the friendly and hospitable gentleman whom we saw inviting Ibarra, with so much insistence, to honor his house with a visit.

In his rich and spacious drawing-room, at Tondo, Captain Tinong is seated in a great arm-chair, passing his hand despairingly across his brow; while his weeping wife, the Capitana Tinchang, reads him a sermon, listened to by their two daughters, who are seated in a corner, mute with stupefaction.

“Ah, Virgin of Antipolo!” cried the wife. “Ah, Virgin of the Rosary; I told you so! I told you so! Ah, Virgin of Carmel! Ah!”

“Why, no! You didn’t tell me anything,” Captain Tinong finally ventured to reply. “On the contrary, you said I did well to keep up the friendship with Captain Tiago, and to go to his house, because—because he was rich; and you said——”[243]

“What did I say? I didn’t say it! I didn’t say anything! Ah, if you had listened to me!”

“Now you throw the blame back on me!” said the captain bitterly, striking the arm of his chair with his fist. “Didn’t you say I did well to invite him to dinner, because, as he was rich——”

“It is true I said that, because—because it couldn’t be helped; you had already invited him; and you did nothing but praise him. Don Ibarra here, and Don Ibarra there, and Don Ibarra on all sides. But I didn’t advise you to see him or to speak to him at the dinner. That you cannot deny!”

“Did I know, for instance, that he was to be there?”

“You ought to have known it!”

“How, if I wasn’t even acquainted with him?”

“You ought to have been acquainted with him!”

“But, Tinchang, if it was the first time I had ever seen him or heard him spoken of?”

“You ought to have seen him before, you ought to have heard him spoken of; that’s what you are a man for! And now, you will be sent into exile, our goods will be confiscated——Oh, if I were a man! if I were a man!”

“And if you were a man,” asked the vexed husband, “what would you do?”

“What? Why, to-day, this very day, I should present myself to the captain-general, and offer to fight against the rebels, this very day!”

“But didn’t you read what the Diario says? Listen! ‘The infamous and abortive treason has been repressed with energy, force, and vigor, and the rebellious enemies of the country and their accomplices will promptly feel all the weight and all the severity of the laws!’ You see, there is no rebellion!”

“That makes no difference, you should present yourself; many did it in 1872, and so nobody harmed them.”[244]
“Yes! it was done also by Father Bug——” But his wife’s hands were over his mouth.

“Say it! Speak that name, so you may be hung to-morrow at Bagumbayan! Don’t you know it is enough to get you executed without so much as a trial? Go on, say it!”

But though Captain Tinong had wished, he couldn’t have done it. His wife held his mouth with both her hands, squeezing his little head against the back of the chair. Perhaps the poor man would have died of asphyxia, had not a new person come on the stage.

It was their cousin, Don Primitivo, who knew Amat by heart; a man of forty, large and corpulent, and dressed with the utmost care.

“Quid video?” he cried, upon entering; “what is going on?”

“Ah, cousin!” said the wife, weeping, and running to him, “I had you sent for, for I don’t know what will become of us! What do you advise—you who have studied Latin and understand reasoning——”

“But quid quæritis? Nihil est in intellectu quod prius non fuerit in sensu.” And he sat down sedately. The Latin phrases seemed to have a tranquillizing effect; the husband and wife ceased to lament, and came

nearer, awaiting the counsel of their cousin's lips, as once the Greeks awaited the saving phrase of the oracle.

"Why are you mourning? Ubinam gentium sumus?"

"You know the story of the uprising——"

"Well, what of it? Don Crisóstomo owes you?"

"No! but do you know that Tinong invited him to dinner, and that he bowed to him on the bridge——in the middle of the day? They will say he was a friend of ours!"

"Friend?" cried the Latin, in alarm, rising; "tell me who your friends are, and I'll tell you who you are yourself! [245]Malum est negotium et est timendum rerum istarum horrendissimum resultatum. Hum!"
So many words in um terrified Captain Tinong. He became frightfully pale. His wife joined her hands in supplication.

"Cousin, you speak to us now in Latin, but you know we haven't studied philosophy like you. Speak to us in Tagal or Castilian; give us your advice."

"It is deplorable that you do not know Latin, my cousin: Latin verities are lies in Tagalo. Contra principi negantem fustibus est arguendum, is, in Latin, a truth as veritable as Noah's ark. I once put it in practice in Tagalo, and it was I who got beaten. It is indeed a misfortune that you do not know Latin! In Latin it might all be arranged. You have done wrong, very wrong, cousins, to make friends with this young man. The just pay the dues of sinners. I feel almost like advising you to make your will!" and he moved his head gloomily from side to side.

"Saturnino, what ails you?" cried Capitana Tinchang, terrified. "Ah! Heaven! he is dead! A doctor! Tinong, Tinongy!"

"He has only fainted, cousin; bring some water." Don Primitivo sprinkled his face, and the unfortunate man revived.

"Come, come! don't weep! I've found a remedy. Put him in bed. Come, come! courage! I am with you, and all the wisdom of the ancients! Call a doctor, and this very day, cousin, go present yourself to the captain-general, and take him a present, a gold chain, a ring; say it's a Christmas present.

Shut the windows and doors, and if any one asks for your husband, say he is seriously ill. Meanwhile I'll burn all the letters, papers, and books, as Don Crisóstomo did. Scripti testes sunt! Go on to the captain's. Leave me to myself. In extremis extrema. [246]Give me the power of a Roman dictator, and see whether I save the coun—What am I saying—the cousin!"

He commenced to upset the shelves of the library, and tear papers and letters. Then he lighted a fire on the kitchen hearth, and the*auto-da-fé* began. "'Revolutions of the Celestial Spheres,' by Copernicus. Whew! ite, maledicte, in ignem kalanis!" he cried, throwing it to the flames. "Revolution and Copernicus! Crime upon crime! If I don't get through soon enough! 'Liberty in the Philippines!' What books! Into the fire with them!" The most innocent works did not escape the common fate. Cousin Primitivo was right. The just pay for sinners.

Four or five hours later, at a fashionable gathering, the events of the day were being discussed. There were present a number of elderly married ladies and spinsters, together with the wives and daughters of clerks of the administration, all in European costume, fanning and yawning. Among the men, who, by their manners, showed their position, as did the women, was a man advanced in age, small and one-armed, who was treated with distinction, and who kept a reserved distance.

"I could never before suffer the monks and civil guards, because of their want of manners," a portly lady was saying, "but now that I see of what service they are, I could almost marry one of them. I am patriotic."

"I am of the very same mind," said a very prim spinster. "But what a pity the former governor isn't with us!"

"He would put an end to the race of filibusterillos!"

"Don't they say there are many islands yet uninhabited?"

"If I were the captain-general——"

"Señoras," said the one-armed man, "the captain-general knows his duty. I understand he is greatly irritated, for he had loaded this Ibarra with favors."

"Loaded him with favors!" repeated the slim gentlewoman, [247]fanning furiously. "What ingrates these Indians are! Is it possible to treat them like

human beings?”
“Do you know what I’ve heard?” asked an officer.

“No! What is it? What do they say?”

“People worthy of confidence say that all this noise about building a school was a pure pretext; what he meant to make was a fort for his own defence when he had been attacked.”

“What infamy! Would any one but an Indian be capable of it?”

“But they say this filibustero is the son of a Spaniard,” said the one-armed man, without looking at anybody.

“There it is again,” cried the portly lady; “always these creoles! No Indian understands anything about revolution. Train crows, and they’ll pick your eyes out!”

“Do you know what I’ve heard?” asked a pretty creole, to turn the conversation. “The wife of Captain Tinong—you remember? We danced and dined at his house at the fête of Tondo—well, the wife of Captain Tinong gave the captain-general, this afternoon, a ring worth a thousand pesos. She said it was a Christmas present.”

“Christmas doesn’t come for a month.”

“She must have feared a downpour,” said the stout lady.

“And so got under cover,” said the slim.

“That is evident,” said the one-armed man, thoughtfully. “I fear there is something back of this.”

“I also,” said the portly lady. “The wife of Captain Tinong is very parsimonious—she has never sent us presents, though we have been to her house. When such a person lets slip a little present of a thousand little pesos ____”

“But is it certain?” demanded the one-armed man.

“Absolutely! His excellency’s aide-de-camp told my cousin, to whom he is engaged. I’m tempted to believe it’s [248]a ring she wore the day of the fête. She’s always covered with diamonds.”

“That’s one way of advertising! Instead of buying a lay-figure or renting a shop——”

The one-armed man found a pretext for leaving.

Two hours later, when all the city was asleep, certain inhabitants of Tondo received an invitation through the medium of soldiers. Authority could not permit people of position and property to sleep in houses so ill guarded. In the fortress of Santiago, and in other government buildings, their sleep would be more tranquil and refreshing. Among these people was the unfortunate Captain Tinong.[249]

[Contents]

LII.
Maria Clara Marries.

Captain Tiago was very happy. During these troublous times, no one had paid any attention to him. He had not been arrested, he had not been subjected to cross-examination, to electrical machines, to repeated foot-baths in subterranean habitations, nor to any other of these pleasantries, well known to certain people who call themselves civilized. His friends, that is to say, those who had been—for he had repudiated his Filipino friends as soon as they had become suspects in the eyes of the Government—had returned home after several days of vacation in the edifices of the State. The captain-general had ordered them out of his possessions, to the great displeasure of the one-armed man, who would have liked to celebrate the approaching Christmas in so numerous a company of the rich.

Captain Tinong returned to his home, ill, pale, another man. The excursion had not been for his good. He said nothing, not even to greet his family, who laughed and wept over him, mad with joy. The poor man no longer left the house, for fear of saluting a filibuster. Cousin Primitivo himself, with all the wisdom of the ancients, could not draw him out of his mutism.

Stories like that of Captain Tinong's were numerous, and Captain Tiago was not ignorant of them. He overflowed with gratitude, without knowing exactly to whom he owed these signal favors. Aunt Isabel attributed the miracle to the Virgin of Antipolo.[250]

"I too, Isabel," said Captain Tiago, "but the Virgin of Antipolo has probably not done it alone; my friends have helped, and my future son-in-law, Señor Linares."

It was whispered that Ibarra would be hung; that in spite of lack of proofs of his guilt, one thing had been found that confirmed the accusation; the experts had declared the school was so designed that it might pass for a rampart, faulty enough, to be sure, but what one might expect of ignorant Indians.

In the midst of affairs, Doña Victorina, Don Tiburcio, and Linares arrived. As usual, Doña Victorina talked for the three men and herself; and her speech had undergone a remarkable change. She now claimed to have

naturalized herself an Andalusian by suppressing d's and replacing the sound of s by that of z. No one had been able to get the idea out of her head; one would certainly have needed to get her frizzes off the outside first. She talked of visits of Linares to the captain-general, and made continual insinuations as to advantages a relative of position would bring.

"As we say," she concluded, "he who sleeps in a good shade, leans on a good staff."

"It's—it's the opposite, wife."

Maria Clara was yet pale, though she had almost recovered from her illness. She kissed Doña Victorina, smiling rather sadly.

"You have been saved, thanks to your connections!" said the doctora, with a significant look toward Linares.

"God has protected my father," said Maria, in a low voice.

"Yes, Clarita, but the time of miracles is past. We, the Spaniards say, trust not in the Virgin, and save yourself by running."

"It's—it's—the contrary, wife!"

"We must talk business," said Doña Victorina, glancing [251]at Maria. Maria found a pretext for leaving, and went out, steadying herself by the furniture. What was said in this conference was so sordid and mean, that we prefer not to report it. Suffice it to say that when they parted, they were all satisfied. Captain Tiago said a little after to Aunt Isabel:

"Have the caterer notified that we give a reception to-morrow. Maria must get ready for her marriage at once. When Señor Linares is our son-in-law, all the palaces will be open to us; and every one will die of envy."

And so, toward eight o'clock the next evening, the house of Captain Tiago was once more full. This time, however, he had invited only Spaniards, peninsular and Philippine, and Chinese. Yet many of our acquaintances were there. Father Sibyla and Father Salvi, among numerous Franciscans and Dominicans; the old lieutenant of the Municipal Guard, more sombre than ever; the alférez, recounting his victory for the thousandth time, looking over the heads of everybody, now that he is lieutenant with grade of

commandant; Dr. Espadaña, who looks upon him with respect and fear, and avoids his glance; Doña Victorina, who cannot see him without anger. Linares had not yet arrived; as a person of importance, he must arouse expectation. There are beings so simple, that an hour's waiting for a man suffices to make him great in their eyes.

Maria Clara was the object of interest to all the women, and the subject of unveiled comments. She had received these ceremoniously, without losing her air of sadness.

"Bah! the proud little thing!" said one.

"Rather pretty," said another, "but he might have chosen some one with a more intelligent face."

"But the money, my dear! The good fellow is selling himself."

In another group some one was saying:[252]
"To marry when one's first fiancé is going to be hung!"

"That is what is called prudent; having a substitute at hand."

"Then, when one becomes a widow——"

Possibly some of these remarks reached the ears of Maria Clara. She grew paler, her hand trembled, her lips seemed to move.

In the circles of men the talk was loud, and naturally the recent events were the subject of conversation. Everybody talked, even Don Tiburcio.

"I hear that your reverence is about to leave the pueblo," said the new lieutenant, whom his new star had made more amiable.

"I have no more to do there; I am to be placed permanently at Manila. And you?" asked Father Salvi.

"I also leave the pueblo," said he, throwing back his shoulders; "I am going with a flying column to rid the province of filibusters."

Father Salvi surveyed his old enemy from top to toe, and turned away with a disdainful smile.

“Is it known certainly what is to be done with the chief filibuster?” asked a clerk.

“You are speaking of Don Crisóstomo Ibarra,” replied another. “It is very probable that he will be hung, like those of 1872, and it will be very just.”

“He is to be exiled,” said the old lieutenant dryly.

“Exile! Nothing but exile?” cried numerous voices at once. “Then it must be for life!”

“If the young man had been more prudent,” went on Lieutenant Guevara, speaking so that all might hear, “if he had confided less in certain persons to whom he wrote, if our attorney-generals did not interpret too subtly what they read, it is certain he would have been released.”

This declaration of the old lieutenant’s, and the tone of [253]his voice, produced a great surprise among his auditors. No one knew what to say. Father Salvi looked away, perhaps to avoid the dark look the lieutenant gave him. Maria Clara dropped some flowers she had in her hand, and became a statue. Father Sibyla, who knew when to be silent, seemed the only one who knew how to question.
“You speak of letters, Señor Guevara.”

“I speak of what I am told by Don Crisóstomo’s advocate, who is greatly interested in his case, and defended him with zeal. Outside of a few ambiguous lines in a letter addressed to a woman before he left for Europe, in which the procurator found a project against the Government, and which the young man acknowledged as his, there was no evidence against him.”

“And the declaration made by the tulisan before he died?”

“The defence destroyed that testimony. According to the witness himself, none of them had any communication with Ibarra, except one named José, who was his enemy, as was proven, and who afterward committed suicide, probably from remorse. It was shown that the papers found on his body were forgeries, for the writing was like Ibarra’s seven years ago, but not like his hand of to-day. For this it was supposed that the accusing letter served as a model.”

“You tell us,” said a Franciscan, “that Ibarra addressed this letter to a woman. How did it come into the hands of the attorney-general?”

The lieutenant did not reply. He looked a moment at Father Salvi, and moved off, twisting the point of his gray beard. The others continued to discuss the matter.

“Even women seem to have hated him,” said one.

“He burned his house, thinking to save himself, but he counted without his hostess!” said another, laughing.

Meanwhile the old soldier approached Maria Clara. She [254]had heard the whole conversation, sitting motionless, the flowers lying at her feet.
“You are a prudent young woman,” he said in a low voice; “by giving over the letter, you assured yourself a peaceful future.” And he moved on, leaving Maria with blank eyes and a face rigid. Fortunately Aunt Isabel passed. Maria had strength to take her by the dress.

“What is the matter?” cried the old lady, terrified at the face of her niece. “You are ill, my child. You are ready to faint. What is it?”

“My heart—it’s the crowd—so much light—I must rest. Tell my father I’ve gone to rest,” and steadying herself by her aunt’s arm, she went to her room.

“You are cold! Do you want some tea?” asked Aunt Isabel at the door.

Maria shook her head. “Go back, dear aunt, I only need to rest,” she said. She locked the door of her little room, and at the end of her strength, threw herself down before a statue, sobbing:

“Mother, mother, my mother!”

The moonlight came in through the window, and through the door leading to the balcony. The joyous music of the dance, peals of laughter and the hum of conversation, made their way to the chamber. Many times they knocked at her door—her father, her aunt, Doña Victorina, even Linares. Maria did not move or speak; now and then a hoarse sob escaped her.

Hours passed. After the feast had come the ball. Maria’s candle had burned out, and she lay in the moonlight at the foot of the statue. She had not

moved. Little by little the house became quiet. Aunt Isabel came to knock once again at the door.

“She must have gone to bed,” the old lady called back to her brother. “At her age one sleeps like the dead.”[255]
When all was still again, Maria rose slowly, and looked out on the terrace with its vines bathed in the white moonlight.

“A peaceful future!—Sleep like the dead!” she said aloud; and she went out.

The city was mute; only now and then a carriage could be heard crossing the wooden bridge. The girl raised her eyes toward the sky; then slowly she took off her rings, the pendants in her ears, the comb and jewelled pins in her hair, and put them on the balustrade of the terrace; then she looked toward the river.

A little bark, loaded with zacate, drew up to the landing-place below the terrace. One of the two men in it climbed the stone steps, sprang over the wall, and in a moment was mounting the stairway of the terrace. At sight of Maria, he stopped, then approached slowly.

Maria drew back.

“Crisóstomo!” she said, speaking low. She was terrified.

“Yes, I am Crisóstomo,” replied the young man gravely. “An enemy, a man who has reason to hate me, Elias, has rescued me from the prison where my friends put me.”

A sad silence followed his words. Maria Clara bent her head. Ibarra went on:

“By the dead body of my mother, I pledged myself, whatever my future, to try to make you happy. I have risked all that remains to me, to come and fulfil that promise. Chance lets me speak to you, Maria; we shall never see each other again. You are young now; some day your conscience may upbraid you. Before I go away forever, I have come to say that I forgive you. Be happy—farewell!” And he began to move away; she held him back.

“Crisóstomo!” she said, “God has sent you to save me from despair. Listen and judge me!”

Ibarra tried gently to release himself.[256]
“I did not come to call you to account; I came to bring you peace.”

“I want none of the peace you bring me. I shall find peace for myself. You scorn me and your scorn will make even death bitter.”

He saw despair in her poor, young face, and asked what she wished.

“I wish you to believe that I have always loved you.”

He smiled bitterly.

“Ah! you doubt me! you doubt your childhood’s friend, who has never hidden a single thought from you! When you know my history, the sad story that was told me in my illness, you will pity me; you will no longer wear that smile. Why did they not let me die in the hands of my ignorant doctor! You and I should both have been happier!”

She stopped a moment, then went on:

“You force me to this, by your doubts; may my mother forgive me! In one of the most painful of my nights of suffering, a man revealed to me the name of my real father. If he had not been my father, this man said, he might have pardoned the injury you had done him.”

Crisóstomo looked at Maria in amazement.

“What was I to do?” she went on. “Ought I to sacrifice to my love the memory of my mother, the honor of him who was supposed to be my father, and the good name of him who is? And could I have done this without bringing dishonor upon you too?”

“But the proof—have you had proof? There must be proof!” said Crisóstomo, staggered.

Maria drew from her breast two papers.

“Here are two letters of my mother’s,” she said, “written in her remorse. Take them! Read them! My father left them in the house where he lived so many years. This man found them and kept them, and only gave them up to

me in [257]exchange for your letter, as assurance, he said, that I would not marry you without my father's consent. I sacrificed my love! Who would not for a mother dead and two fathers living? Could I foresee what use they would make of your letter? Could I know I was sacrificing you too?"
Ibarra was speechless. Maria went on:

"What remained for me to do? Could I tell you who my father was? Could I bid you ask his pardon, when he had so made your father suffer? Could I say to my father, who perhaps would have pardoned you—could I say I was his daughter? Nothing remained but to suffer, to guard my secret, and die suffering! Now, my friend, now that you know the sad story of your poor Maria, have you still for her that disdainful smile?"

"Maria, you are a saint!"

"I am blessed, because you believe in me——"

"And yet," said Crisóstomo, remembering, "I heard you were to marry ——"

"Yes," sobbed the poor child, "my father demands this sacrifice; he has loved me, nourished me, and it did not belong to him to do it. I shall pay him my debt of gratitude by assuring him peace through this new connection, but——"

"But?"

"I shall not forget my vows to you."

"What is your thought?" asked Ibarra, trying to read in her clear eyes.

"The future is obscure. I do not know what I shall do; but I know this, that I can love but once, and that I shall not belong to one I do not love. And you? What will you do?"

"I am no longer anything but a fugitive—I shall fly, and my flight will soon be overtaken, Maria——"

Maria took his head in her hands, kissed his lips again and again, then pushed him away with all her strength.[258]
"Fly, fly!" she said. "Adieu!"

Ibarra looked at her with shining eyes, but she made a sign, and he went, reeling for an instant like a drunken man. He leaped the wall again, and was back in the little bark. Maria Clara, leaning on the balustrade, watched till it disappeared in the distance.[259]

[Contents]

LIII.
The Chase on the Lake.

“Listen, señor, to the plan I have made,” said Elias, as he pulled toward San Gabriel. “I will hide you, for the present, at the house of a friend of mine at Mandaluyong. I will bring you there your gold, that I hid in the tomb of your great-grandfather. You will leave the country——”

“To live among strangers?” interrupted Ibarra.

“To live in peace. You have friends in Spain; you may get amnesty.”

Crisóstomo did not reply; he reflected in silence.

They arrived at the Pasig, and the little bark began to go up stream. On the bridge was a horseman, hastening his course, and a whistle long and shrill was heard.

“Elias,” said Ibarra at length, “your misfortunes are due to my family, and you have twice saved my life. I owe you both gratitude and restitution of property. You advise me to leave the country; well, come with me. We will live as brothers.”

Elias shook his head.

“It is true that I can never be happy in my country, but I can live and die there, perhaps die for my country. That is always something. But you can do nothing for her, here and now. Perhaps some day——”

“Unless I, too, should become a tulisan,” mused Ibarra.

“Señor, a month ago we sat in this same boat, under the light of this same moon. You could not have said such a thing then.”[260]
“No, Elias. Man seems to be an animal who varies with circumstances. I was blind then, unreasonable, I know not what. Now the bandage has been torn from my eyes; the wretchedness and solitude of my prison has taught me better. I see the cancer that is eating into our society; perhaps, after all, it must be torn out by violence.”

They came in sight of the governor-general’s palace, and thought they saw unusual movement among the guards.

“Your escape must have been discovered,” said Elias. “Lie down, señor, so I can cover you with the zacate, for the sentinel at the magazine may stop us.”

As Elias had anticipated, the sentinel challenged him, and asked him where he came from.

“From Manila, with zacate for the iodores and curates,” said he, imitating the accent of the people of Pandakan.

A sergeant came out.

“Sulung,” said he to Elias, “I warn you not to take any one into your boat. A prisoner has just escaped. If you capture him and bring him to me, I will give you a fine reward.”

“Good, señor; what is his description?”

“He wears a long coat, and speaks Spanish. Look out for him!”

The bark moved off. Elias turned and saw the sentinel still standing by the bank.

“We shall lose a few minutes,” he said; “we shall have to go into the rio Beata, to make him think I’m from Peña Francia. You shall see the rio of which Francisco Baltazar sang.”

The pueblo was asleep in the moonlight. Crisóstomo sat up to admire the death-like peace of nature. The rio was narrow, and its banks were plains strewn with zacate. Elias discharged his cargo, and from the grass where they were hidden, drew some of those sacks of palm leaves that [261]are called bayones. Then they pushed off again, and soon were back on the Pasig. From time to time they talked of indifferent things.
“Santa Ana!” said Ibarra, speaking low; “do you know that building?” They were passing the country house of the Jesuits.

“I’ve spent many happy days there,” said Elias. “When I was a child, we came here every month. Then I was like other people; had a family, a fortune; dreamed, thought I saw a future.”

They were silent until they came to Malapad-na-batô. Those who have sometimes cut a wake in the Pasig, on one of these magnificent nights of

the Philippines, when from the limpid azure the moon pours out a poetic melancholy, when shadows hide the miseries of men and silence puts out their sordid words—those who have done this will know some of the thoughts of these two young men.

At Malapad-na-batô, the rifleman was sleepy, and seeing no hope of plunder in the little bark, according to the tradition of his corps and the habit of this post, he let it pass. The guard at Pasig was no more disquieting.

The moonlight was growing pale, and dawn was beginning to tint the east with roses, when they arrived at the lake, smooth and placid as a great mirror. At a distance they saw a gray mass, advancing little by little.

"It's the falúa," said Elias under his breath. "Lie down, señor, and I will cover you with these bags."

The outlines of the government boat grew more and more distinct.

"She's getting between us and the shore," said Elias, uneasily; and very gradually he changed the direction of his bark. To his terror he saw the falúa make the same change, and heard a voice hailing him. He stopped and thought. The shore was yet some distance away; they [262]would soon be within range of the ship's guns. He thought he would go back to Pasig, his boat could escape the other in that direction; but fate was against him. Another boat was coming from Pasig, and in it glittered the helmets and bayonets of the Civil Guards.

"We are caught!" he said, and the color left his face. He looked at his sturdy arms, and took the only resolution possible; he began to row with all his might toward the island of Talim. The sun was coming up. The bark shot rapidly over the water; on the falúa, which changed its tack, Elias saw men signalling.

"Do you know how to manage a bark?" he demanded of Ibarra.

"Yes. Why?"

"Because we are lost unless I take to the water to throw them off the track. They will pursue me. I swim and dive well. That will turn them away from you, and you must try to save yourself."

"No, stay, and let us sell our lives dear!"

“It is useless; we have no arms; they would shoot us down like birds.”

As he spoke, they heard a hiss in the water, followed by a report.

“You see!” said Elias, laying down his oar. “We will meet, Christmas night, at the tomb of your grandfather. Save yourself! God has drawn me out of greater perils than this!”

He took off his shirt; a ball picked it out of his hands, and two reports followed. Without showing alarm, he grasped the hand Ibarra stretched up from the bottom of the boat, then stood upright and leaped into the water, pushing off the little craft with his foot.

Outcries were heard from the falúa. Promptly, and at some distance, appeared the head of the young man, returning [263]to the surface to breathe, then disappearing immediately.
“There, there he is,” cried several voices, and balls whistled.

The falúa and the bark from Pasig set out in pursuit of the swimmer. A slight wake showed his direction, more and more removed from Ibarra’s little bark, which drifted as if abandoned. Every time Elias raised his head to breathe, the guards and the men of the falúa fired on him.

The chase went on. The little bark with Ibarra was left far behind. Elias was not more than a hundred yards from the shore. The rowers were getting tired, but so was Elias, for he repeatedly raised his head above the water, but always in a new direction, to disconcert his pursuers. The deceiving wake no longer told the place of the swimmer. For the last time they saw him, sixty feet from the shore. The soldiers fired—minutes and minutes passed. Nothing again disturbed the tranquil surface of the lake.

A half hour later, one of the rowers claimed to have seen traces of blood near the shore, but his comrades shook their heads in doubt.[264]
[Contents]

LIV.
Father Dámaso Explains Himself.

In vain the precious wedding presents heaped up; not the brilliants in their velvet cases, not embroideries of piña nor pieces of silk, drew the eyes of Maria Clara. She saw nothing but the journal in which was told the death of Ibarra, drowned in the lake.

Suddenly she felt two hands over her eyes, clasping her head, while a merry voice said to her:

“Who is it? Who is it?”

Maria sprang up in fright.

“Little goose! Did I scare you, eh? You weren’t expecting me, eh? Why, I’ve come from the province to be at your marriage——” And with a satisfied smile, Father Dámaso gave her his hand to kiss. She took it, trembling, and carried it respectfully to her lips.

“What is it, Maria?” demanded the Franciscan, troubled, and losing his gay smile. “Your hand is cold, you are pale—are you ill, little girl?” And he drew her tenderly to him, took both her hands and questioned her with his eyes.

“Won’t you confide in your godfather?” he asked in a tone of reproach. “Come, sit down here and tell me your griefs, as you used to do when you were little, and wanted some tapers to make wax dolls. You know I’ve always loved you—never scolded you——” and his voice became very tender. Maria began to cry.[265]
“Why do you cry, my child? Have you quarrelled with Linares?”

Maria put her hands over her eyes.

“No; it’s not about him—now!”

Father Dámaso looked startled. “And you won’t tell me your secrets? Have I not always tried to satisfy your slightest wish?”

Maria raised to him her eyes full of tears, looked at him a moment, then sobbed afresh.

“My child!”

Maria came slowly to him, fell on her knees at his feet, and raising her face wet with tears, asked in a voice scarcely audible:

“Do you still love me?”

“Child!”

“Then—protect my father and make him break off my marriage.” And she told him of her last interview with Ibarra, omitting everything about the secret of her birth.

Father Dámaso could scarcely believe what he heard. She was talking calmly now, without tears.

“So long as he lived,” she went on, “I could struggle, I could hope, I had confidence; I wished to live to hear about him; but now—that they have killed him, I have no longer any reason to live and suffer.”

“And—Linares——”

“If he had lived, I might have married—for my father’s sake; but now that he is dead, I want the convent—or the grave.”

“You loved him so?” stammered Father Dámaso. Maria did not reply. The father bent his head on his breast.

“My child,” he said at last in a broken voice, “forgive me for having made you unhappy; I did not know I was doing it! I thought of your future. How could I let you [266]marry a man of this country, to see you, later on, an unhappy wife and mother? I set myself with all my strength to get this love out of your mind, I used all means—for you, only for you. If you had been his wife, you would have wept for the unfortunate position of your husband, exposed to all sorts of dangers, and without defence; a mother, you would have wept for your children; had you educated them, you would have prepared them a sad future; they would have become enemies of religion; the gallows or exile would have been their portion; had you left them in ignorance, you would have seen them tyrannized over and degraded. I could not consent to this. That is why I found for you a husband whose children should command, not obey; punish, not suffer—I knew your childhood’s

friend was good, and I liked him, as I did his father; but I hated them both for your sake, because I love you as one loves a daughter, because I idolize you—I have no other love; I have seen you grow up, there isn't an hour in which I do not think of you, you are my one joy——" And Father Dámaso began to cry like a child.
"Then if you love me, do not make me forever miserable; he is dead, I wish to be a nun."

The old man rested his forehead in his hand.

"A nun, a nun!" he repeated. "You do not know, my child, all that is hidden behind the walls of a convent, you do not know! I would a thousand times rather see you unhappy in the world than in the cloister. Here your complaints can be heard; there you have only the walls! You are beautiful, very beautiful; you were not made to renounce the world. Believe me, my child, time alters all things; later you will forget, you will love, you will love your husband—Linares."

"Either the convent or—death," repeated Maria, with no sign of yielding. [267]
"Maria," said the father, "I am not young. I cannot watch over you always; choose something else, find another love, another husband, anything, what you will!"

"I choose the convent."

"My God, my God!" cried the priest, burying his face in his hands. "You punish me, be it so! But watch over my daughter!—Maria, you shall be a nun. I cannot have you die."

Maria took his hands, pressed them, kissed them as she knelt.

"Godfather, my godfather," she said.

"Oh, God!" cried the heart of the father, "thou dost exist, because thou dost chastise! Take vengeance upon me, but do not strike the innocent; save my daughter!"[268]
[Contents]

LV.
The Nochebuena.

Up on the side of the mountain, where a torrent springs, a cabin hides under the trees, built on their gnarled trunks. Over its thatched roof creep the branches of the gourd, heavy with fruit and flowers. Antlers and wild boars' heads, some of them bearing their long tusks, ornament the rustic hearth. It is the home of a Tagalo family living from the chase and the cup of the woods.

Under the shade of a tree, the grandfather is making brooms from the veins of palm leaves, while a girl fills a basket with eggs, lemons, and vegetables. Two children, a boy and a girl, are playing beside another boy, pale and serious, with great, deep eyes. We know him. It is Sisa's son, Basilio.

"When your foot is well," said the little boy, "you will go with us to the top of the mountain and drink deer's blood and lemon juice; then you'll grow fat; then I'll show you how to jump from one rock to another, over the torrent."

Basilio smiled sadly, examined the wound in his foot, and looked at the sun, which was shining splendidly.

"Sell these brooms, Lucia," said the grandfather to the young girl, "and buy something for your brothers. To-day is Christmas."

"Fire-crackers, I want fire-crackers!" cried the little boy.

"And what do you want?" the grandfather asked Basilio. The boy got up and went to the old man.

"Señor," he said, "have I been ill more than a month?"[269]
"Since we found you, faint and covered with wounds, two moons have passed. We thought you were going to die——"

"May God reward you; we are very poor," said Basilio; "but as to-day is Christmas, I want to go to the pueblo to see my mother and my little brother. They must have been looking everywhere for me."

“But, son, you aren’t well yet, and it is far to your pueblo. You would not get there till midnight. My sons will want to see you when they come from the forest.”

“You have many children, but my mother has only us two; perhaps she thinks me dead already. I want to give her a present to-night—a son!”

The grandfather felt his eyes grow dim.

“You are as sensible as an old man! Go, find your mother, give her her present! Go, my son. God and the Lord Jesus go with you!”

“What, you’re not going to stay and see my fire-crackers?” said the little boy.

“I want you to play hide and seek!” pouted the little girl; “nothing else is so much fun.”

Basilio smiled and his eyes filled with tears.

“I shall come back soon,” he said, “and bring my little brother; then you can play with him. But I must go away now with Lucia.”

“Don’t forget us!” said the old man, “and come back when you are well.” The children all accompanied him to the bridge of bamboo over the rushing torrent. Lucia, who was going to the first pueblo with her basket, made him lean on her arm; the other children watched them both out of sight.

The north wind was blowing, and the dwellers in San Diego were trembling with cold. It was the Nochebuena, [270]and yet the pueblo was sad. Not a paper lantern hung in the windows, no noise in the houses announcing the joyful time, as in other years.
At the home of Captain Basilio, the master of the house is talking with Don Filipo; the troubles of these times have made them friends.

“You are in rare luck, to be released at just this moment,” Captain Basilio was saying to his guest. “They’ve burned your books, that’s true; but others have fared worse.”

A woman came up to the window and looked in. Her eyes were brilliant, her face haggard, her hair loose; the moon made her uncanny.

“Sisa?” asked Don Filipo, in surprise. “I thought she was with a physician.”

Captain Basilio smiled bitterly.

“The doctor feared he might be taken for a friend of Don Crisóstomo’s, so he drove her out!”

“What else has happened since I went away? I know we have a new curate and a new alférez——”

“Well, the head sacristan was found dead, hung in the garret of his house. And old Tasio is dead. They buried him in the Chinese cemetery.”

“Poor Don Astasio!” sighed Don Filipo. “And his books?”

“The devout thought it would be pleasing to God if they should burn them; nothing escaped, not even the works of Cicero. The gobernadorcillo was no check whatsoever.”

They were both silent. At that moment, the melancholy song of Sisa was heard. A child passed, limping, and running toward the place from which the song came; it was Basilio. The little fellow had found his home deserted and in ruins. He had been told about his mother; of Crispin he had not heard a word. He had dried his tears, smothered his grief, and without resting, started out to find Sisa.[271]

She had come to the house of the new alférez. As usual, a sentinel was pacing up and down. When she saw the soldier, she took to flight, and ran as only a wild thing can. Basilio saw her, and fearing to lose sight of her, forgot his wounded foot, and followed in hot pursuit. Dogs barked, geese cackled, windows opened here and there, to give passage to the heads of the curious; others banged to, from fear of a new night of trouble. At this rate, the runners were soon outside the pueblo, and Sisa began to moderate her speed. There was a long distance between her and her pursuer.

“Mother!” he cried, when he could distinguish her.

No sooner did Sisa hear the voice than she again began to run madly.

“Mother, it’s I,” cried the child in despair. Sisa paid no attention. The poor little fellow followed breathless. They were now on the border of the wood.

Bushes, thorny twigs, and the roots of trees hindered their progress. The child followed the vision of his mother, made clear now and then by the moon’s rays across the heavy foliage. They were in the mysterious wood of the family of Ibarra. Basilio often stumbled and fell, but he got up again, without feeling his hurts, or remembering his lameness. All his life was concentrated in his eyes, which never lost the beloved figure from view.

They crossed the brook, which was singing gently, and to his great surprise, Basilio saw his mother press through the thicket and enter the wooden door that closed the tomb of the old Spaniard. He tried to follow her, but the door was fast. Sisa was defending the entrance—holding the door closed with all her strength.

“Mother, it’s I, it’s I, Basilio, your son!” cried the child, falling from fatigue. But Sisa would not budge. Her feet braced against the ground, she offered an energetic resistance. [272]Basilio examined the wall, but could not scale it. Then he made the tour of the grave. He saw a branch of the great tree, crossed by a branch of another. He began to climb, and his filial love did miracles. He went from branch to branch, and came over the tomb at last.

The noise he made in the branches startled Sisa. She turned and would have fled, but her son, letting himself drop from the tree, seized her in his arms and covered her with kisses; then, worn out, he fainted away.

Sisa saw his forehead bathed in blood. She bent over him, and her eyes, almost out of their sockets, were fixed on his face, which stirred the sleeping cells of her brain. Then something like a spark flashed through them. Sisa recognized her son, and with a cry fell on his senseless body, pressing it to her heart, kissing him and weeping. Then mother and son were both motionless.

When Basilio came to himself, he found his mother without consciousness. He called her, lavished tender names on her, and seeing she did not wake, ran for water and sprinkled her pale face. But the eyes remained closed. In terror, Basilio put his ear to her heart, but her heart no longer beat. The poor child embraced the dead body of his mother, weeping bitterly.

On this night of joy for so many children, who, by the warm hearth, celebrate the feast which recalls the first loving look Heaven gave to earth; on this night when all good Christian families eat, laugh, and dance, ’mid love and kisses; on this night which, for the children of cold countries, is magical with its Christmas trees, Basilio sits in solitude and grief. Who knows? Perhaps around the hearth of the silent Father Salvi are children playing; perhaps they are singing:

“Christmas comes,
And Christmas goes.”

[273]

The child was sobbing. When he raised his head, a man was looking silently down at him.

“You are her son?” he asked.

Basilio nodded his head.

“What are you going to do?”

“Bury her.”

“In the cemetery?”

“I have no money—if you would help me——”

“I am too weak,” said the man, sinking gradually to the ground. “I am wounded. For two days I have not eaten or slept. Has no one been here to-night?” And the man sat still, watching the child’s attractive face.

“Listen,” said he, in a voice growing feebler, “I too shall be dead before morning. Twenty paces from here, beyond the spring, is a pile of wood; put our two bodies on it, and light the fire.”

Basilio listened.

“Then, if nobody comes, you are to dig here; you will find a lot of gold, and it will be all yours. Study!”

The voice of the unknown man sank lower and lower. Then he turned his head toward the east, and said softly, as though praying:

“I die without seeing the light of dawn on my country. You who shall see it and greet it, do not forget those who fell in the night!”